

THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor : R. PALME DUTT

Volume 19

August, 1937

Number 8

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

WILLIAM RUST

Unity: New Advance

"BRITISH RESIDENT"

The Palestine Report

RICHARD GOODMAN

The Poisoned Peace

ALLEN HUTT

A Trade Union Purge

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A NEW ADVANCE TO UNITY

By WILLIAM RUST

"It is highly disturbing to find the Party in the lethargic, indifferent and passive condition it is to-day . . . the net result of the post-election series of by-elections has been a fall of many thousands in the aggregate Labour vote—and the decline has been a marked feature of the by-elections in the present year."—MR. JOHN MARCHBANK in the *Railway Review*.

A NEW feature in the Labour movement is that the discussion on the unchecked stagnancy and decline is now coming out into the open. The leaders' hard shell of self-satisfaction is being broken and they are expressing concern and making certain efforts to improve the position.

Firstly, they have been compelled to abandon their impossible and disastrous Spanish policy ; secondly, a new campaign around an Immediate Programme has been announced ; and thirdly, the membership has been conceded the right to advocate unity within the Party and to vote separately for its representatives on the National Executive.

The monument is beginning to turn into movement. We welcome these signs of life, but their tardy nature and the continued counter-moves against action show that the task of re-awakening the movement as a whole has yet to be achieved. In fact, the fight for action and unity is markedly uneven and although the right-wing is being compelled to retreat its virulent resistance is responsible for serious setbacks.

The problem of how to defeat the National Government is not being seriously faced. The mere announcement of an Immediate Programme will not mean a big change or stem the decline in the Labour vote. The Labour Party is famous for its paper programmes, both long and short, and this new one will share the fate of the others unless the Labour leadership faces up to the issue of how to stimulate the daily political fight against the National Government and what allies can be obtained in order to ensure victory.

A new rally can certainly be achieved around the Immediate Programme although from the point of view of its actual contents it is extremely faulty and weak. Nevertheless, the activity that can be engendered around it has a far greater significance than the shortcomings of the document itself. Possibly the National Executive will be persuaded to see this later, but at present their approach is doctrinaire and they

raise no question of *how* to fight for the programme and what new forces can be rallied behind it.

Chamberlain replied to the Immediate Programme by stating that he had no intention of declaring a General Election. With the Labour movement in its present state he has nothing to fear. But Chamberlain knows the slender basis of the National Government and that it would not require a very large turnover of votes to destroy his huge majority. It is worth recalling that the last General Election gave 10,076,832 Opposition votes and 11,801,532 for the Government. In all by-elections the Government is dropping votes heavily and narrowly escaped defeat at St. Ives and N. Dorset.

But it was the Liberal not the Labour vote that provided this serious challenge to the Government. This fact certainly provides food for thought and the timely appearance of G. D. H. Cole's book on the "People's Front" will be welcomed by all those who are giving some hard thinking to the paramount problem of the day, namely, how to create a basis for the defeat of the National Government and its replacement by a Government that will fight for peace, democracy and the raising of the standards of the people.

This is not the advocacy of a mere electoral alliance. Something much more than this is needed. A common front against the Government can only be established through the every-day co-operation of all progressive minded people and by the strengthening of the Labour Party and trade unions on the basis of unity.

The new mass urge for unity now being expressed on an international scale is shown in the comradely discussions between the representatives of the Communist International and the Chairman and Secretary of the Labour and Socialist International which are a big step forward even though the communique issued after the Paris meeting on July 9th goes no further than stating "the exchange of views showed complete agreement of both sides in respect to the action to be adopted to aid Republican Spain." If joint action does not follow it is only because of the continued stubborn opposition of one affiliated section, namely, the British Labour Party, which whilst agreeing to change its policy on Spain still condemns all plans for unity in action.

Nevertheless, the decision of the British Labour Party to abandon the policy of non-intervention is a great success for the adherents of unity. But it has taken the Labour Party Executive nearly a year to grasp that the filthy and deceitful "non-intervention" was merely a cover for the Fascist invasion of Spain. If the policy adopted in June had been carried out by the Internationals in August last, Fascism would have been crushed and Spain would have become a democratic republic, a peaceful stronghold of the People's Front.

Joy in this eleventh-hour change of front is tempered by the knowledge that the passing of a resolution is not likely to force the National Government to abandon its pro-Fascist policy or to avert the new devilish blow that Hitler and Mussolini are preparing to strike against Spain. It is certainly of great historical importance that the demands of the three Internationals are now the same but, to use the words of Thorez to de Brouckere, "the realisation of these demands needs an exceptional effort of all the working-class organisations throughout the world, and unless they act in common they will not be strong enough to win over public opinion."

The passing of the new resolution condemning non-intervention may have solved the conscience of the British leaders, but unless it is followed by common action it will not help Spain.

The stalemate caused by the attitude of the British Labour leaders again painfully illustrates the divisions in the international Labour movement, but the new advance towards unity is unmistakable.

The balance of the first six months of the Unity Campaign is certainly in favour of the Left, but the dictatorial expulsion of the busmen's leaders, one of the most ghastly acts of disruption in the history of trade unionism, reveals the desperation of the right wing and the depths to which they will sink.

The vote against unity secured by Bevin and Marchbanks at their respective trade union conferences whilst partly attributable to manipulation of the machine, misrepresentation and downright lying also showed that there are weaknesses in the Unity Campaign and that sections of the rank and file have yet to be aroused from their indifference.

Marchbank's methods are worth examining as an example of that unbalanced demagoguery which is causing considerable confusion within the great trade unions. Marchbank is Bevin's chief runner-up for the position of the Great-Red-Router, and at the recent Conference of the N.U.R. he persuaded the delegates to reject a resolution on the united front by sixty votes to twenty. At this Conference Marchbank, after spending ten months in preventing arms from going to Spain, graciously announced that he now favoured the sending of both arms and men. Subsequently, Marchbank, with all the effrontery of a mountebank, spent a full hour viciously opposing any suggestion of any united action to implement his policy and promises.

Marchbank's strictures on the present condition of the Labour Party, quoted at the head of the article, could hardly be couched in stronger terms, but instead of permitting a reasoned and sober consideration of this state of affairs he introduced into the N.U.R. Conference the atmosphere of panic and tried to terrify the delegates with visions of bloodshed

and civil war. Concealing the fact that at the Warsaw Conference of the I.T.F.U., the French leaders were the most zealous advocates of unity and that as a result of the united front the French Unions are now stronger than the British, Marchbank, tried to mislead the delegates by trotting out the exploded allegation that the Communists split the French Trade Unions seventeen years ago. In answer to the demand for united action on Spain, for the forty-hour week, holidays with pay and higher wages, Marchbank raved about being trapped into insurrection and street barricades.

Thus he got his majority, but only by downright brazen deception, and even then he could not shake the solid 25 per cent. for unity which is the basis of the future majority against him. He got his majority, but had to concede the fundamental case made out by the unity advocates, namely, that the policies of the present leadership had brought about lethargy, apathy and despair.

This glaring contradiction reveals the instability of the majority which Marchbank obtained by demagoguery and false pretences. The virulence of the right-wing leaders, the new frothy outbursts against unity including Bevin's tightening up of his mighty machine demonstrate not their strength but their weakness and their fear. Demagoguery and deceit may still impede the advance of unity, but the political undermining of the right wing is an undeniable fact.

The fruitful collaboration between the Communist Party and the Socialist League has now resulted in the formation of the Labour Unity Committee, which with the aid of that excellent paper the *Tribune*, is conducting the new form of the Unity Campaign with extraordinary vigour. Threats of expulsion have put an end to the collaboration of Communists and Labour men on the public platform, but instead of the dismal fizzle foretold by Transport House the campaign is gathering itself for new and bigger efforts. To-day there exists on a national and local scale groupings of leading Labour men and women who are actively striving for unity. This campaign has caught the imagination of the keen and enthusiastic workers and has wielded them together around a common aim: but for the campaign the rot within the Labour Party would have gone even deeper.

During the coming months the working-class movement will probably see in its true perspective the significance of the constructive work achieved by the unity committees and how the vision and determination of the Unity leaders during the despairing months following the Edinburgh Conference helped to hold the movement together.

The fight for unity is succeeding and the able strategy of the Labour Unity Committee is greatly helping that fight, but many hard battles

have yet to be fought before the reactionary leadership is defeated. Their systematic and desperate attacks on the Soviet Union are significant of the lengths they are prepared to go in this struggle, as there is no doubt that these leaders who are not in the least filled with tender feelings towards the spies and wreckers, are solely concerned with utilising the executions in order to encourage political backwardness amongst some sections of the masses and to play it off against the work of the unity supporters. This is the object of anti-Soviet drive now being conducted by the *Daily Herald*. Sir Walter Citrine is also prepared to take the P.O.U.M. leaders under his wing—apparently any wrecker, traitor or spy is assured by absolution providing his activities are directed against the Communist Party or the People's Front.

But some workers in Britain have found it difficult to grasp the meaning of the trials because with the ending of the economic difficulties and the beginning of socialist prosperity they imagined that the future would be a cake-walk. Even in the Soviet Union, Stalin found it necessary to warn the Communist Party against the giddiness of success and the tendency towards a one-sided concentration on economic construction to the neglect of political vigilance and the significance of international events.

Colossal successes within the Soviet Union, but outside the offensive of Fascism, is reaching its greatest height and hundreds of its spies and agents are intriguing within the frontiers of the Workers' Republic. Small wonder that the ambitious and the corrupt, including a small group in high places, should be overpowered by the thought that Fascism is advancing. Lacking faith in Socialism and yet greedy for power, they intrigue with the Fascist enemy and speculate on the possibilities of a capitalist restoration in a dismembered Russia. There are others to whom economic security and position has meant degeneracy, and yet others who still consumed with hatred of the Soviet Power, and encouraged by Fascism, resort to desperate acts of wrecking.

The fact that such elements still remain in a Socialist country even twenty years after the revolution may be regrettable, but it is none the less true.

The rottenness carried over from the old capitalist society cannot be wiped out even in twenty years: the Soviet Union does not exist in a political vacuum, but is surrounded by a hostile capitalist world, and the effect of this class relationship is felt within the country. The Soviet masses are, however, alive to the following warning uttered by Lenin in the early years of the Revolution:

The working class is not severed by a Chinese wall from the old bourgeois society. And when a revolution takes place, it does not happen as in the case of the death of an individual, when the deceased

person is simply removed. When the old Society perishes, you cannot rail the corpse of bourgeois society into a coffin and lower it into the grave. It disintegrates in our midst: the corpse rots and poisons us. There has not been and cannot be a single great revolution otherwise . . . not a single country can pass from capitalism to socialism except in an atmosphere of disintegrating capitalism and of painful resistance to the latter. And so we say that our first slogan is centralisation, and our second slogan is the unity of the workers. Workers unite and unite again.

And what if the Soviet Government had ignored this profound historical truth, if they had allowed the saboteurs, traitors and spies to work on undisturbed in complicity with Germany and Japan?

Maybe an attack on the Soviet Union from within and without, as on Spain, would convince the leaders of the British Labour Movement of the justice meted out to the traitors, spies and wreckers. But even so, they would probably want to give "non-intervention" a trial before deciding that the British workers should support the Soviet people.

We would rather not wait for such proofs of the war plot against the Soviet Union. And we say that not only because of our complete confidence in the leaders of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, but also because of a sober Marxist reading of the present historical situation.

The treachery of a small group of political and military leaders and the attempts at systematic wrecking are the fruits of the tense international situation, that relentless struggle between the classes in which Fascism is on the offensive. That struggle will continue to find a certain repercussion among elements within the Soviet Union until victory over Fascism is secured.

The corpse of bourgeois society continues to rot inside the new socialist order. But the dominant feature in the Soviet Union to-day is not the continued existence of anti-social groupings, but the fact that the masses are so virile and the leadership so firm and determined that the poison is being swiftly burnt out. These recent events repeat the lesson of history that no great revolution can live unless it is constantly on guard. We greet the economic successes of the Soviet Union, its unparalleled scientific achievements and the might of its defence forces. But above all, we rejoice in the integrity and unfailing revolutionary vigilance of the leaders and masses which has made possible this mighty progress of mankind.

THE PALESTINE REPORT

By "BRITISH RESIDENT"

THE Royal Commission's Report on Palestine is a document of great importance, and deserves close attention, both from those who are concerned for the future happiness of the people of Palestine, and from those who have a scientific interest in the character and methods of imperialism.

One value of the Report is that it is, in some respects, surprisingly honest. It acknowledges facts which have hitherto been generally suppressed or distorted. The following, for instance, is a quite objective account of the character of the 1936 disturbances :

It has been pointed out that the outbreak of 1933 was not only, or even mainly, an attack on the Jews, but an attack on the Palestine Government. In 1936 this was still clearer. Jewish lives were taken and Jewish property destroyed ; but the outbreak was chiefly and directly aimed at the Government. The word "disturbances" gives a misleading impression of what happened. It was an open rebellion of the Palestinian Arabs, assisted by fellow-Arabs from other countries, against British Mandatory rule.

The analysis of the underlying causes of the revolt is fair, too, in its general conclusions. These causes, the Commission finds, were :

- (i) The desire of the Arabs for national independence.
- (ii) Their hatred and fear of the establishment of the Jewish National Home.

Arab hatred and fear, that is to say, not of the fact that Jews should find a home in Palestine, but of the fact that an alien and unwanted Government should establish a specially privileged and protected community of Jews there, as an instrument of its policy, without consulting the wishes or interests of the existing inhabitants.

The conflict between Arabs and Jews in Palestine, the Report goes on to explain, is not

in its essence an inter-racial conflict arising from any old instinctive antipathy of Arabs towards Jews. There was little or no friction . . . between Arab and Jew in the rest of the Arab world until the strife in Palestine engendered it. And there has been precisely the same political trouble in Iraq, Syria and Egypt—agitation, rebellion and bloodshed—where there are no "National Homes." Quite obviously, then, the problem of Palestine is political.

The last statement is important, though it sounds a platitude. It is, taken in its context, an admission that the Arab-Jewish conflict is only

a by-product of the national struggle of the Palestine Arabs against imperialism. This struggle is, in its essential characteristics, the same as any other anti-imperialist struggle. It has taken on an anti-Jewish appearance only because the Zionists in Palestine have hitherto tried to build their national home behind the barbed wire of British imperialism.

Coming to the future, the Report admits that both Jews and Arabs are qualified for self-government, that neither community can be expected to acquiesce in the continuance of the present alien bureaucratic régime, and that, as far at any rate as the Arabs are concerned, this régime "can only be maintained in Palestine for any length of time by a rigorous system of repression."

* * * *

But it will not be necessary, in the Commission's view, to resort to repression, if both Arabs and Jews have the good sense to recognise what is good for them and accept the liberal offer of partition. The Commission's viewpoint has been echoed by the British Press. The whole range of dailies, from the *Manchester Guardian* and *Daily Herald* to the *Morning Post*, supports the principle of partition. Only the *Daily Express*, from an isolationist, and the *Daily Worker*, from an anti-imperialist, point of view oppose the scheme.

It seems to be as easy for the Government to induce the public to accept a new policy as a new king. For the last twenty years British policy in Palestine has been based on the assumption that her obligations to Arabs and Jews were compatible. Each successive Colonial Secretary has frequently assured the House of Commons that the establishment of a Jewish National Home was compatible with the safeguarding of Arab rights (including the right to self-government). This dogma was asserted by Mr. Ormsby-Gore as recently as June 19, 1936, in the course of the House of Commons Palestine debate.

"The sole aim," he said, "of His Majesty's Government is to obtain an objective and non-partisan report, to enable them to do justice to all sections of the Palestine population. I am convinced that on the basis of the recommendations of such a Commission, *a means can be found, within the framework of the Mandate, with its dual obligations to Jews and non-Jews, to secure that end.*"

Contrast that statement, one of dozens, with the following passage from the Report :

Nor do we suggest that the obligations Britain undertook towards the Arabs and the Jews some twenty years ago have lost in moral or legal weight through what has happened since. *The trouble is that they have proved irreconcilable ; and, as far ahead as we can see, they must continue to conflict. To put it in one sentence, we cannot, in Palestine as it now is, both concede the Arab claim to self-government and secure the establishment of the Jewish National Home.*

Is this an example of the honesty of the British Government? Of its willingness to admit mistakes when they are pointed out to it? Nothing of the sort. It is an example simply of the flexibility of British imperialism, of the ease with which it is prepared to shift its ground from one policy to another as expediency demands. Britain has never been so innocent as to suppose that the Zionist claim to a National Home and the Arab claim to self-government were reconcilable, or that a British Mandate could reconcile them. But so long as it suited Britain to control Palestine through the instrument of a Mandate the Dogma of Compatibility was kept up. And the Arabs, who denied the dogma, and revolted to enforce their claim, were repressed in the name of the dogma. But the recent revolt and repression cost about 1,000 Arab lives; 90 Jewish lives; 21 British lives; and about £3½ million to the taxpayers of Palestine. These events showed plainly that the Mandate was now useless as the instrument of British imperialism. To continue to operate it would mean a continuation of serious bloodshed and financial loss, involving loss of British prestige and a weakening of her position in the Mediterranean. Consequently, it was necessary to evolve a new policy which should (a) give Britain as firm a foothold as the Mandate gave her; (b) relieve her of responsibility for public security; (c) satisfy sections of both communities. These conditions were fulfilled by partition. Rule through the Mandate has consequently been dropped, and rule through partition is to begin. It is now the Dogma of Incompatibility that is necessary for salvation.

* * * *

The partition proposals, which the Commission has recommended and the Government has in principle accepted, can be briefly summarised as follows.

Two independent states, one Arab and one Jewish, are to be created by partition of the present territory of Palestine. The British Government will conclude treaties with each of these states on the lines of the treaties already concluded between Britain and Iraq and between France and Syria. Roughly speaking, the Jewish state is to consist of the Maritime Plain, from a point about ten miles north of Majdal up to the Lebanon frontier, plus the Plain of Esdraelon and the whole of the hill country of Galilee. The Arab state is to consist of the hill country of Samaria and Judaea, the Jordan valley, the Beersheba desert, and the town of Jaffa, together with the whole of Trans-Jordan (at present under a separate Mandate). A third wedge-shaped area, running up from Jaffa to a point east of Jerusalem, and including Jerusalem and the Lydda air-base, is to be placed under a new permanent British Mandate, with the ostensible object of protecting the Holy Places as "a sacred trust of civilisation." The administration of Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee is also to fall within this Mandate, as is the port of Aqaba on an arm of the Red Sea.

The Arab state is to have free access for commercial purposes to Haifa port ; similarly the Jewish state is to have free access to Aqaba and the Egyptian frontier.

According to the Royal Commission's estimate, the area allotted to the Jewish state supports a population of about 225,000 Arabs, while in the area allotted to the Arab state there are about 1,250 Jews. The Commission proposes a transference of these minority populations, and the resettlement of the Arab minority within the Arab state. The cost of settlement and of development of land for settlement should be borne partly by a subvention from the Jewish state, partly by a grant from the British Treasury.

* * * *

In spite of the plausibility of the arguments which the Commission advances for partition and its apparent anxiety to do the best for all concerned, it is the duty of the British Labour Movement to recognise the really reactionary character of these proposals and to throw its energy into resisting them.

I.

By partition the British Government continues to withhold from the Palestine Arabs their right to national independence, and from the Jews their right to participate with the Arabs in the life and government of a united independent Palestine on terms of equal citizenship.

Imperialism has frequently sought to check the national liberation movements of subject peoples by division along racial, religious, or cultural lines. The original establishment in the Arab territories of a Mandate system instead of the united independent state which the Arab peoples desired was one example of this policy. The French division of Syria into five separate administrative areas—Syria, the Lebanon, the Jebel Druse, the Alaouites, and the Sanjak of Alexandretta, each to a greater or less extent under French control—was another. Both these partitions have been a constant source of rebellion and unrest. Now, however, Syria has achieved a real measure of unification. But Palestine is to suffer a fresh dismemberment.

The Report tries to justify partition in the following way. The Arabs and Jews, it argues, have shown themselves incapable of living together as a single united people. Arab loyalty is towards the Arab political leaders and the Arab national idea ; Jewish loyalty is to the Zionist political leaders and the Jewish National Home. Logically, therefore, fulfilment should be given to the national aspirations of both peoples through the creation of two separate national states.

No Socialist can expect this argument. The Palestine situation cannot be explained by speaking of it as though Arabs and Jews were two naughty children who had to be shut up in separate rooms by Britain in order to produce peace. Such a picture does not even square with the Report's own analysis. As was stated above, the Report makes it plain that Arab-Jewish antagonism has been the product of two factors—the Mandate and the Balfour Declaration. British imperialism has used these two instruments to maintain her position in Palestine. Zionism has used them to build a Jewish National Home. This interlocking of the policy of Zionism with the policy of British imperialism has meant that the Arabs, in their revolt against British rule, have necessarily been brought into conflict with the Jews.

Previous to the War, Jews and Arabs lived peacefully together in Palestine. They are living peacefully together to-day in Bagdad, Damascus and Alexandria. Since the British conquest Jews and Arabs have not succeeded in living peacefully in Palestine simply because the conditions for a peaceful common life—self-determination and equal citizenship—have never existed. Now the old instrument of British imperialism, the Mandate, is to be terminated. In a united Palestine, freed from the Mandate, there should be nothing to prevent Jews and Arabs from gradually adjusting their differences and arriving at a settlement in regard to the future government of their country. But for this it is essential that Palestine should remain *united*, and that the Jews should accept the principle of *equal citizenship*; a divided Palestine, with a segregated Jewish community and the intensification of the National Home within a limited area, will act as an irritant, not as a solvent to the present antagonism.

II.

Partition is an arrangement which is likely to intensify the existing conflict between Arabs and Jews and to create fresh causes of friction.

The only real justification of partition would be that it was an arrangement genuinely desired by the Arab and Jewish masses. If it is carried through it will be in the teeth of the bitter hostility of both peoples. The Arab Higher Committee and the Jewish Agency in Palestine have both protested against the scheme. In these circumstances both peoples are bound to exploit to the full the new opportunities for conflict which statehood will give them. There will be constant tension over such questions as frontiers, tariffs, and access to the sea.

Here is one example of the way in which the creation of these two race-states is likely to intensify existing antagonism. The Arabs have since the 1936 Revolt maintained a fairly effective boycott of Jewish goods. If partition were carried through, this would enable the Arab state to

develop the boycott by means of prohibitive tariffs. Probably the solidarity of the Arab world would be sufficient to extend this boycott to other Arab countries, with the result that the Jewish state would be cut off from the markets of its neighbours, to the impoverishment of both Arabs and Jews.

If Jewish industry in Palestine is to develop it requires freer access to the markets of the neighbouring Arab-speaking states. Political unification is likely to help it to obtain this access ; political division is likely to hinder it. The repercussion of this fact on the question of Jewish immigration is obvious.

The Communist Party of Great Britain has correctly described the proposed transference of 225,000 Arabs from the Jewish to the Arab state as "fantastic and mischievous." In regard to this proposal there are several points that must be borne in mind.

(a) A large number of the Arabs who are to be transferred are living in purely Arab areas in the hill villages between Acre and Safad.

(b) Arabs living in mixed areas such as the Maritime Plain and the Plain of Esdraelon are in the last resort to be transferred under compulsion.

(c) The "instructive precedent" which the Report cites, the exchange effected between the Greek and Turkish minorities after the Greco-Turkish War of 1922, is really no precedent since, as the Report admits, "the analogy breaks down at one essential point." In Greece there was surplus land available. In Palestine there is at present no surplus land. The Report speaks hopefully of large-scale plans for irrigation and water-storage in Trans-Jordan, Beersheba and the Jordan valley, of surveys, and authoritative estimates. But all this talk cannot cover up the fact that it is proposed to evict over 200,000 Arabs without any definite plan for their settlement. Nor is there any suggestion that the partition scheme will be dropped or modified if it is found in the end that there is nowhere to settle them.

Advocates of partition argue that transference is only a detail, which can be adjusted in future negotiations if the principle of partition is accepted. In fact, however, it is the keynote of the whole scheme. Britain cynically proposes to buy itself out of any further obligations to the Jews by this offer of the forcible expropriation of 200,000 Arabs. The Mandate has failed and is to be liquidated. The homes and lands of these Arabs represent the final payment to be made to the Zionist shareholders.

It is not unlikely that these Arab transferees will in fact be treated in the way that landless Arabs have been treated in the past. There will be a flourish of trumpets over the large sums to be spent upon development and settlement. There will be Development Commissions and

Settlement Commissions. In the end it will be found that the majority of the landless Arabs have disappeared and that the claims of a large number of those who remain are bad. In other words, most of these expropriated Arabs are likely to form a new reservoir of cheap labour in the Jewish and Arab states, while a few thousands may, for appearance sake, be settled on land elsewhere.

III.

The proposal to terminate the Mandate is, in itself a welcome step. But partition will allow British imperialism to maintain, either directly or indirectly, a large measure of its present control in Palestine.

By securing a permanent Mandate over the Jaffa-Jerusalem enclave and the Sea of Galilee, Britain will probably strengthen her strategic position. A permanent footing in a restricted area is likely to be of greater advantage to Britain than her present unstable position as Mandatory for the whole of Palestine.

The Aqaba enclave will give Britain access to the Red Sea and thus control of a route to the East alternative to the Suez Canal.

Haifa (important both as a terminus of the oil pipe line from Kirkuk and as a cruiser base), Acre, Safad, and Tiberias are to be retained under temporary British Mandate for an indefinite period, on the ground of their mixed populations.

The collection of customs at the ports and the allocation of the appropriate sums to the Arab State, the Jewish State, and the Mandated Area are to be entrusted for a period to Great Britain. This arrangement is likely to give her a measure of control over the revenues of the two states.

It is likely that the proposed linking of the Arab State with Trans-Jordan, which appears on the surface to be a move in the direction of Arab unity, is in fact intended to prepare the way for the establishment of the Amir Abdullah, who as ruler of Trans-Jordan has usually shown himself a good servant of British imperialism, upon the throne of the new combined state. Thus the Palestine Arabs are to be deprived of the democratically elected government which they have always demanded even in the restricted area remaining to them, and are to be submitted to the rule of a rajah.

It is clear that though in theory partition is to depend upon the consent of both communities, preparations are in fact being made to push the arrangement through by force. The Commission has spoken too definitely against the continuance of the Mandate for that to be a possible alternative. The only real possibilities, then, are partition or self-government for a united Palestine. Britain will use all her weight to compel acceptance of

the former. What chance is there that the people of Palestine will compel Britain to accept the latter?

Palestine will not be able to avoid partition, or a long and bloody attempt to impose partition, unless Arabs and Jews can combine to resist it. The present situation presents an exceptionally good opportunity for the formation of a united anti-imperialist front of Arabs and Jews. Neither wish to see their country mutilated. Neither want Britain permanently established in Jerusalem. Both will lose economically by the complicated political arrangements that partition involves.

There are signs that a new alignment of forces is in fact already beginning. Two articles on the subject of the Palestine Report were published in *Time and Tide* of July 17, one by Mr. H. St. John Philby, the other by Professor Norman Bentwich. Mr. Philby, the imperialist "friend of the Arabs," welcomes partition and argues that the Arabs have obtained 23/24ths of their demands. Professor Bentwich, the moderate Zionist, opposes partition on the ground that it conflicts with the ideals and interests of both Jews and Arabs.

May not the two peoples agree to keep the integral Palestine they love, and work together for the common well-being and joint national independence?

The *Jewish Chronicle* of July 16, in a leading article, approaches the situation from a similar point of view.

We are convinced that a way could and should be found for Jews and Arabs to build in amity a common homeland.

Hitherto, there has been a conflict within the ranks of British imperialism between the pro-Zionist and pro-Arab sections. The Commission's Report has resolved that conflict. Both the pro-Zionists and the pro-Arabs have come down heavily in favour of partition.

Now that the imperialist forces are closing their ranks the anti-imperialist forces must do the same. Progressive Zionists must recognise that in the long run they have nothing to gain from co-operation with British imperialism; that if they wish to secure peace and happiness for the Jews of Palestine and keep the Arab world open to Jewish immigration they must reach a settlement with the Arabs. The passages quoted above indicate that Zionists themselves are increasingly coming to realise that this is so.

But talk of peace and amity between Jews and Arabs is not sufficient. It is essential that Zionists should recognise that the only possible basis of settlement is the termination of the Mandate, and the establishment of an independent democratic government, with full rights of citizenship for the Jews, in a united Palestine. The British Labour Movement, too, must demand that partition be rejected and that a joint Arab-Jewish conference be summoned to determine the future of Palestine on this basis.

THE POISONED PEACE

By RICHARD GOODMAN

EXACTLY one year after the uprising of the fascist Generals which plunged Spain into war and led to the invasion of the Peninsula by German and Italian armies, the National Government has brought forward a new plan of “non-intervention.”

Described by the *Times* Diplomatic Correspondent as a “balanced compromise,” the plan has been accepted by the states-members of the London Committee as a “basis for discussion.” Its character can be judged from the warm reception it has been given by both the Italian and German fascist press.

Briefly, this new plan to save “non-intervention” proposes :

- the suppression of naval control by a system of international observers in all Spanish ports, in ships visiting Spain and, if possible, on all air-fields ;

- the immediate restoration of land frontier control ; and

- the recognition of “limited belligerent rights” at sea to both the legal Spanish Government and the rebels, once the London Committee has placed on record its opinion that the arrangements for the withdrawal of foreign “nationals” (not foreign “combatants”—the fascist thesis has been accepted—R.G.) are working satisfactorily and that this withdrawal has in fact made “substantial progress.”

At the time of writing, there is a complete deadlock on the London Committee. The proposals have, however, been strongly criticised in the Soviet press (e.g., *Izvestia*, July 17) and have been received very sceptically in France. The Spanish people, speaking through the mouth of their President, Azana, has condemned the scheme as “the worst of all the intervention that there has been by foreign Powers.”

The attitude taken up by the Italian representative on the London Committee, Grandi, supported by Germany and Italy, show that the fascist Powers are taking up a similar position to that which they have done in the past, and are determined once more to turn a British “compromise” to their full advantage.

It is, however, with the wider significance of the plan—the situation in which, and the reasons why, it has been brought forward and that it has been brought forward by Britain—and not with its actual detailed proposals that we are concerned here, on this twenty-third anniversary of the outbreak of the World War.

There can be no doubt that the plan is designed by the National Government to meet the present crisis in the system of “non-intervention” and to preserve that system from complete breakdown. It is,

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in effect, the reply of the British National Government, on behalf of British Imperialism, on the one hand to the intensified offensive of the fascist Powers, who have been consistently encouraged by the British policy, and on the other to the growing democratic upsurge, as it might well be called, against the treacherous scheme of "non-intervention," seen more and more not only as a policy operating against the Spanish people and their government but directly responsible for the rapid deterioration in the world situation during the past year. The Annemasse and Paris meetings of the representatives of the Communist International and the Labour and Socialist International which showed that there is complete unanimity of aim so far as Spain is concerned and the decision of the L.S.I. and the International Federation of Trade Unions to end their support for "non-intervention" are the beginning—but only the beginning—of a process which if carried through to its logical conclusion could sweep away "non-intervention," National Government or no National Government, save the Spanish Republic, administer an incalculable blow against fascism and preserve the peace of the world.

There are some who, basing their reasoning solely on mechanical considerations of "imperial strategy," express amazement that the British Government, by pursuing the policy of "non-intervention," should "endanger imperial interests." These people—and there are not a few of them in the ranks of Labour itself—believe that the policy of the Government is "mistaken," "cowardly" and "vacillating." They are sorely mistaken. Misrepresenting so the policy of the National Government they help to cover up the deliberate and utterly ruthless power-policy of British imperialism, a policy which this present Government is determined to carry through even though in the end it must end in European and world war.

One year of war in Spain and one year of the policy of "non-intervention" enables us to see not only the real reasons behind this policy but the end to which that policy is driving.

When the British Government last year first advanced its policy of "non-intervention"—and blackmailed the French Government into accepting it—we were told, not by Government spokesmen alone but even by the leadership of the organised Labour movement in this country, that "non-intervention" was the only possible policy if the Spanish conflict was to be successfully confined to the Peninsula. We were told by these people—who, be it noted, consciously or unconsciously subscribed to the fascist theory that it is possible to "localise" war—that the alternative to "non-intervention" was world conflagration.

The same argument has been used by Mr. Eden in a speech on the new British plan.

It is the sole argument used by the Government to defend its policy.

Yet if "non-intervention" is, in fact, the only policy which can preserve peace what are we to say for that policy when, after it has been in operation for an entire year, the Prime Minister of the very country that invented it and championed it, can only declare, at the end of that year, that "we may yet save peace?"

Leaving aside the fact that a major war continues to be waged in Spain, a war in which on one front alone (Bilbao) there has been a concentration of heavy artillery greater than on any front during any year of the last war, another major war has just started in the Far East and, in that other key sector, Central Europe, can be heard the ominous rumblings of a conflict which may at any moment break into eruption.

It is impossible to doubt that the main responsibility for this lies on the shoulders of the British National Government whose policy of "non-intervention," imposed by blackmail on the other non-fascist states and made possible by the weakness and disunity of the British Labour movement, has encouraged the fascist offensive to new and ever greater acts of provocation and aggression.

It is no accident that the series of anti-Soviet provocations by the Japanese on the Amur River reached a climax, but a short time after the National Government had grovelled in the dirt before Germany after the fascist bombardment of Almeria. Nor is it an accident that the Japanese militarists launched their new and greatest attack on North China at the very moment when Britain was drawing up its new plan of "balanced compromise" to save "non-intervention."

The provocations on the Amur and the attack on North China are not events isolated either from one another or from what is happening in the rest of the world. Availing themselves of the situation created in Europe by the German and Italian offensive and British "non-intervention," seizing on the new violent anti-Soviet campaign launched in the German, Italian and British press, the Japanese militarists have struck.

Again, turning to Central Europe, we must ask whether the fact that German fascism suddenly discovered that the Nazi engineer Weigel had been, as was alleged, maltreated by the Czech police a whole year before and began to talk immediately about "reprisals" against Czechoslovakia as well as against Republican Spain, was unconnected with the fact that it was also at that time getting away with the monstrous provocations, first of Almeria and then of the "Leipzig incident."

Earlier in the year, on February 20, the agreement forbidding the sending of "volunteers" to Spain was concluded and hailed in the Government-inspired press here as a great success for the policy of "non-intervention" and as the best possible proof of the "sincerity" and "goodwill" of the fascist Powers. At that time a new offensive, with the active participation of large numbers of Italian troops, was

being prepared against Madrid. Quiapo de Llano had fixed March 15 as the day for the city to fall. No one can doubt that had Madrid fallen it would have been "non-intervention" and "non-intervention" alone that was responsible. And had Madrid fallen it would have been not the end of the war but, as we can now see, the launching of a new fascist offensive, political and military, in both Central Europe and Africa.

For a Nazi putsch had been timed to take place in Budapest on March 15, the very day upon which Madrid was scheduled to fall. The garrison at Munich had been held in a state of preparedness for several days before. In the mobilisation order issued by the Nazi General von Richenau, military chief of Munich, it was explained that :

the Fuhrer being about to undertake important international action, the army must be ready to throw its weight into the scale.

That this plot miscarried as the result of the intervention of the leaders of the Hungarian opposition parties was accidental. But that it was planned and scheduled to take place when it was possible only because of the attitude of the "non-interventionist" Powers to the fascist offensive in Spain.

At the same time Mussolini was preparing a new action in Africa. Having embarked for Libya at the beginning of the offensive against Madrid, while still on board the warship Pola, he sent, on March 13, his "victory" telegram to the commander of the Mancini division in Spain. On March 14 he was proclaimed "Protector of Islam," and on the day Madrid was to have fallen he had arranged to deliver a great speech in Tripoli which was to have given the signal for the launching of a new Italian action in Africa. His return to Rome was to have been a veritable "Roman triumph." It was no fault of the British Government or the policy of "non-intervention" that this plan was brought to nothing by the route of his troops at Guadalajara, a defeat which, according to the prominent French journalist Dzelepy :

save Europe from a new catastrophe whose repercussions would have been incalculable (E. N. Dzelepy, *The Spanish Plot*, p. 135).

If we go back still further, even to the very first months of the war, when, thanks to "non-intervention," the prospects of Republican Spain looked black and the rebel generals were anticipating a speedy victory, we find that it was exactly at this time that the Goebbel's press and the Goebbel's radio turned on full blast once more their anti-Czech propaganda and screamed aloud their allegations that the Czech government was permitting Soviet aerodromes, staffed with Red Army Officers, to be built on Czechoslovak territory. Was it chance, too, that, but a little later, every capital in Europe was buzzing with rumours of an impending fascist uprising in some form in the Sudeten districts of Czechoslovakia ? We can be sure that had the fascist generals achieved

the speedy victory they anticipated, some such development would have taken place which would have made European war inevitable.

These more sensational developments were so many high spots in an intensified fascist diplomatic offensive in Central Europe, which, with intrigues and threats not so diplomatic following almost continuously one on the other, has resulted in a deterioration of the situation there immensely greater during the past twelve months than that during any corresponding previous period. The Nazi influence in Yugoslavia and Rumania—Czechoslovakia's allies in the Little Entente—has been enormously increased, especially in Yugoslavia. It is openly admitted that the Nazi threat to Austria, with all its implications, is greater to-day than at any time since the abortive putsch and the assassination of Dolfuss in 1934. Even in Czechoslovakia itself, where the Government is violently "non-interventionist," the agents of Hitler and their allies have made advances greater than ever before.

It is not possible, in the face of these incontestible facts, to maintain the old argument that the policy of "non-intervention" has saved the peace of the world. To-day, as ever, nothing is static. For any given period, either the forces of peace or the forces of war must register an advance. On every sector of the peace front, the situation has deteriorated. In two of those sectors, major war is raging. Once again, as it was twenty-three years ago, the whole body of peace is poisoned, poisoned as a result of the policy of "non-intervention," and sores have already broken out. The crisis may be to-day, to-morrow or the day after.

We return, therefore, to the question of what actually are the reasons for the British policy of "non-intervention."

The experiences of twelve months of that policy, together with the behaviour of the British Government in the Manchurian crisis and during the Italo-Abyssinian war, enable us to answer those who declare that the British policy is "weak," "cowardly" and to show that, in fact, this policy is deliberate and definite.

The matter goes right to the root of the world policy of British imperialism as carried out by the present National Government.

It is impossible to understand that policy in general or the present phase of that policy, "non-intervention," in particular unless we realise what the two main forces determining that policy are.

In the first place it is absolutely necessary for British imperialism in order to preserve itself, to preserve the existing social and economic order wherever it is challenged and this, to-day, means that it is absolutely necessary for British imperialism at least to look with favour on all those forces which are directed towards crushing democratic advance wherever that advance is manifest.

In the second place, it is equally necessary for British imperialism to preserve as intact and unchallenged as possible its strategic positions throughout the world in readiness for the clash with those rival imperialisms which it considers ultimately inevitable.

Consequently, British imperialism must and does—owing to the weakness and disunity of the democratic movement in this country—maintain a friendly attitude to the fascist powers leading the struggle against democracy, and, on the other, prepare in every possible way for the ultimate conflict with these very powers. Therefore it attempts, therefore, to bargain with these Powers (the Anglo-German *rapprochement*, the negotiations for a Western European pact; earlier, the “gentlemen’s agreement” with Italy) whenever possible—thereby encouraging them directly and indirectly to continue and intensify their offensive—while, at the same time, it manœuvres and makes direct preparations for the clash with them which is thus brought progressively nearer, making sure, in so doing, that every move is labelled, for the benefit of home consumption, “in the interests of peace.” Thus at one and the same time it destroys the basis of peace—collective security—and, in the name of peace, rearms in frantic fashion.

From the class point of view, British imperialism and its National Government could not but welcome the uprising of the fascist generals in Spain and, realising that the Spanish fascists could not win on their own, it could not but welcome to some extent the Italian and German aid received by Franco. From the point of view of imperialist strategy, however, it realised the potential and later actual danger of this support.

It was essential, therefore, for Britain, while remaining friendly with both Italy and Germany, to place itself in a position from which it could bargain with these Powers and to the necessary extent control their adventures, while manœuvring as best it could, to emerge from the whole affair without endangering too gravely its strategic positions and with, if possible, the lion’s share of any of the spoils going. Hence, “non-intervention.”

Britain sees as the logical outcome of its “non-intervention” policy some form of “mediation” in Spain in which it shall take the lead and effect some settlement with Germany and Italy to its advantage and against the interests of the people of Spain. (This was obvious as long ago as December last year.)

The desperate, despicable and, it must be admitted, successful efforts to prevent the League taking over the Spanish crisis which Mr. Eden made at the recent meeting of the League Council showed very clearly that Britain was determined not to be hampered by the Covenant and to preserve the monopoly of its own creation the London Committee, over the Spanish crisis.

In the present crisis of "non-intervention," therefore, we see the British plan as a new attempt to preserve this system, as a new and extreme effort. The whole of the last twelve months serve to establish the fact that "non-intervention" is the deliberate and definite policy of British imperialism and no "weak," "vacillating" line as some would have it.

Yet the consequences of that policy are obvious enough. Too deeply involved in Spain to allow themselves to be *manœuvred* out of the loot and the strategic advantages they hope to obtain. Each new "compromise" only encourages them further and deepens still more the real crisis behind the surface crisis of "non-intervention," a crisis which allowed to continue by the international Labour movement, can only end in war, more terrible and more disastrous than that which broke twenty-three years ago.

In this situation the responsibility of the international Labour movement and especially the Labour movement in this country, becomes more urgent than ever.

As a result of the ever-increasing demand of the rank-and-file of organised Labour in Britain, the Labour leadership has at last been forced to abandon its support for "non-intervention" and this has been followed by a corresponding change in the position of the Labour and Socialist International and the International Federation of Trade Unions. But at present that change has been a paper change only. Apart from one meeting—and that organised by the London Trades Council and the London Labour Party—not a single step has been taken by the Labour leadership to mobilise the country against "non-intervention." Indeed, there are definite signs that a relapse has already set in. But a few days after the decision of the L.S.I. and the I.F.T.U., the *Daily Herald*, in a leading article, once again talked about "real non-intervention." Again, when the British plan was debated in the Commons on Thursday, July 15, a division on the issue was deliberately avoided.

Nor is that all. Just at the very moment when the widest and closest unity of all the progressive forces throughout the world is more necessary than ever, if Spain is to be saved and peace preserved, certain of the responsible leaders of the British Labour movement have joined full cry in the anti-Soviet campaign launched anew by the fascist powers and have coupled this with a new and reinforced drive against all militants and all moves for unity in this country. Nor is the fact that Sir Walter Citrine has extended his attack against the Soviet Union to include the Popular Front Government in Spain, in his defence of the Trotskyist enemies of the Spanish people, accidental.

With each day that passes the time grows shorter. Yet there is still time to save from utter death the poison-riddled body of the peace of the world.

PURGE OR PROGRESS IN THE TRADE UNIONS ?

By ALLEN HUTT

EVENTS in the Transport and General Workers' Union are profoundly shaking the whole trade union movement. Following the secrecy-shrouded biennial conference of Mr. Bevin's organisation at Torquay, with its authorisation to the Executive to put an end to "the rank and file movement and similar organisations within the union or any form of organisation not authorised by the constitution," the Executive decision to expel three leading members of its London Bus section and to suspend four others from holding any union office for periods varying from two to five years, shows that Mr. Bevin means business. It is because they realise just what that business will lead to that trade unionists are reacting with such keen indignation.

Let me give an example. I am a newspaperman ; and I do not imagine anyone will dispute that the printing trade unions, as exemplified in the chapels of the various departments of our big national newspapers, stand as the quintessential type of haughty and exclusive craft unionism, traditionally conservative to a degree. It so happened that the quarterly delegate meeting of my newspaper's Federated House Chapel—i.e., the body representing all the trade unions in the concern—was held a few days after the announcement of the T. & G.W.U. expulsions. Delegates from one chapel forthwith proposed a resolution expressing grave concern at the expulsions, characterised as "Fascist methods," and urging that dictatorship should not be allowed to supplant democracy in the trade union movement. Not only did the meeting as a whole endorse this protest ; it did so with warmth ; delegates whom one would normally classify as reactionary rose to speak in whole-hearted support. It would be idle of Mr. Bevin to dismiss an incident of this kind as the work of "Reds." There was not a single Communist among those shrewd and level-headed delegates ; and I know from experience that ordinarily, in accordance with their habits and traditions, they manifest all too little concern in what goes on outside their own trade and their own societies.

Clearly, then, there must be something unusually grave in the T. & G.W.U. developments to call forth such a reaction. Were those printers right when they flung the harsh epithet "Fascist" at Mr. Bevin's expulsion policy ? How is it that trade unionists, even of the staid sort,

appear to be unmoved by Mr. Bevin's references (made at the power workers' section of his union, meeting in Blackpool on May 17 last) to "secret documents" alleged to constitute "a form of gangster tyranny, which goes on among men once they get into the clutches of Communists?" Let us briefly survey the background of the present developments.

It is alleged on behalf of Mr. Bevin's Executive Council that the "problem that has been facing the union is one of organised bodies, inside and outside the union, interfering with its administration, dealing with its policy, and inducing the members to take action contrary to the declared policy of the union." The reference is to the London Busmen's Rank-and-File Movement and the Communist Party, the implication being that the former Movement was a "Communist manoeuvre." Actually the Rank-and-File Movement arose among the London busmen in the summer of 1932 as a result of the negotiations then in progress for a new agreement. It was, as a matter of historical fact, a spontaneous opposition to an agreement which involved serious wage-cuts, and an expression of a desire to strengthen the official leadership by rousing keener and more general activity among the membership. Despite the rejection of the proposed terms of agreement by mass meetings the Central Bus Committee of the union had decided to take a ballot, declaring that "these are the best terms obtainable, and the alternative to the acceptance of these terms is strike action." The Committee were wrong. By a four to one majority the ballot went against the terms; but there was no strike, and the demands for wage-cuts were withdrawn.

That victory for the union was without question the work of the Rank-and-File Movement, established at a meeting in the Memorial Hall on August 12, 1932. Responding to the initiative of the Dalston branch, no fewer than 34 bus branches were represented at that meeting. Subsequent mass meetings and demonstrations of busmen, including large rallies outside the official delegate conferences at Transport House, strengthened the hand of the union and made it clear to the employers that power lay on the side of the busmen in their determination to adhere to the "declared policy of the union"—to maintain and improve their conditions of labour.

Five years have passed since those days. The Rank-and-File Movement carried on its work without any concealment. It had nothing to conceal. For it had no aim other than to make the union strong. Characteristically, one of its leaders, W. Payne, secretary of the Dalston branch of the union (now expelled), was the first member of the T. & G.W.U. to win the Trades Union Congress badge for union recruitment. And it became evident that the union members themselves placed their confidence in the leaders of the Rank-and-File Movement; for they proceeded to elect men like A. F. Papworth (expelled) to the Executive

Council itself, J. F. Hayward, B. Sharkey, W. Ware (suspended) to the Central Bus Committee. The views which the members thus endorsed were advocated in the *Busman's Punch*, a lively monthly paper issued by the Rank-and-File Movement, which attained a circulation of some 10,000 copies. The issue of this paper is now one of the counts against the Rank-and-File ; in particular the allegation that they sought the assistance of the Labour Research Department in the production of the paper is adduced as proof conclusive that the whole affair was a "Communist manoeuvre." That the L.R.D. is a sinister agency of Moscow is, of course, easily perceptible from the list of its affiliated trade unions, including those well-known Bolshevik bodies the National Union of Railwaymen, Typographical Association, Amalgamated Engineering Union, National Union of Journalists, etc., etc.

Strangely enough, in the immediate background to the present attack on the Rank-and-File—namely, the London bus strike of May, 1937—it was Mr. Bevin and the executive who had been flouting the Union constitution, while the accused acted with entire constitutional propriety in carrying out the mandate of the members of the London Bus Section. It will be remembered that the London busmen's desire for a shorter working day was scarcely satisfied by the actions of Mr. Bevin and the executive. Indeed, when it is recalled that Mr. Bevin and the executive themselves acted undemocratically by dismissing the Central Bus Committee, suspending the bus delegate conference, and concluding an agreement to end the strike without consulting the members, it appears that their case against the Rank-and-File leaders is pretty unconvincing. Mr. Bevin and his associates, in short, did not realise the desires of their members for a much-needed improvement in conditions. True, they accepted the initial decision to strike ; but thereafter the astounding limitation of the struggle to one section of London transport only was bound to lead to failure and the creation of conditions more favourable than before for the launching of a frontal attack against the Rank-and-File Movement.

It may be argued that this picture has been one familiar enough in this country during the past ten years. Discrimination and disciplinary measures against militant trade unionists are no new thing. What is new about it is that the case is so extreme and that it introduces a new disruption at the very moment when every circumstance imperiously proclaims the need for unity, when the cause of unity, now recognised as the central issue confronting the working class, is making great strides.

The T. & G.W.U. expulsions are the answer of Mr. Bevin and the Transport House oligarchy to the unity movement. And that is why my printer colleagues were on the right track when they used the word "Fascist" in condemning the expulsions. At this time of day it is

hardly necessary to argue that the disheartening and disruption of a movement by discrimination against its left wing helps to bring Fascism to power (Germany) just as unity alone has proved itself capable of withstanding the Fascist onslaught (Spain).

What is also new in Mr. Bevin's attempted purge is that the disciplinary powers now accorded to his Executive, confirmed by consequential changes in union rules, are of so wide a character that any expression of opinion by the members (especially any attempt at association to employ the forms of union democracy to turn that opinion into action) running counter to the official views of Transport House can be immediately proscribed. Put plainly, the purge aims at making the largest trade union in the country absolutely safe for the policy of which Mr. Bevin has long been a leading exponent—that is, the policy of accommodation to capitalism as opposed to a consistent working-class policy of struggle against capitalism. Mr. Bevin was the chief protagonist of Mondism, for which the workers paid the price in lower wages, worsened conditions, and the wearing pace of rationalised, speeded-up industry. Mr. Bevin was the chief protagonist of "non-intervention" in Spain, a policy whose results everyone knows and which the movement itself has now been compelled to abandon. Mr. Bevin is a member of the Board of Directors of the *Daily Herald*, a newspaper whose repeated attacks on the Soviet Union, whose playing into the hands of the British Government on Spain, whose suppressions and distortions have caused widespread disgust throughout the entire Labour movement.

If we translate this analysis into terms of practical trade union policy this is the result: the line of Mr. Bevin involves the damping down of effort to improve conditions, while the line of those whom he attacks affords the only hope of gaining what the workers immediately want and what trade union unity and a forward policy has brought them in other countries (France, for instance)—namely, higher wages, the 40-hour week and holidays with pay. This bread-and-butter angle is a peculiarly vital one. Here we may see, in the simplest and most concrete manner, the implications of the two lines of policy. For the working class desires immediate improvement in its condition; and the plain commonsense of the matter is that progress towards this end can only be assured by finishing once for all with the policy of the purge and all that it implies.

It is curious, in this connection, to observe how one of the principal arguments advanced by Mr. Bevin and his friends recoils upon their own heads. This is the argument from unofficial strikes. It has been expressed in its most finished form by Sir Walter Citrine, as follows:

Throughout the history of all democratic movements new ideas, associated with some economic or political philosophy, have produced their pioneers and their protagonists who were ready to challenge existing ideas and policies. That is a healthy and essential quality of

democratic movements. What we are seeing to-day is something rather different. The new technique is the tactic of a political party, pursued with great determination and with constantly varying expedients to capture the Labour Movement. Within the trade unions its method is to usurp the power of the democratically elected Executives by fomenting unofficial strike action whenever the opportunity presents itself.

The argument that unofficial strikes are "fomented" by the Communists is, one can easily perceive, of the same order as the old-time anti-Labour pretence that the working class only embarks on any action against its beloved masters as a result of the machinations of "outside agitators." If Transport House denies this, they can settle the matter quite simply by holding a public inquiry into the unofficial strikes which have occurred all over the country and in all industries during the past two years. These spontaneous movements, which accounted for some 900,000 working days in 1936, embraced aircraft workers, provincial busmen, engineers, shipbuilders, miners, clothing workers, builders, meat porters, etc. In all these strikes the demands were simple and straightforward—for better wages, against dilution, for trade union recognition, for holidays with pay, for shorter hours. They were, in short, movements in favour of what has for generations been the "declared policy" of every trade union.

Indeed, the issue was simply enough put at the annual conference of Trades Councils, held in May of this year. Mr. Bevin himself there denounced unofficial strikes, supporting a paragraph to similar effect in the official report to the conference. The account in the *Daily Herald*, March 31, 1937, reads as follows :

After a lively debate, a motion to refer back the paragraph in the report and the statement was defeated by 46 votes to 32. Apparently many delegates refrained from voting, as it was announced that about 140 were present. Most of the speeches sought to justify support of unofficial strikes.

An Oxford delegate said either the Trades Councils had to support working-class agitation or get out of business. He hoped the T.U.C. would change its attitude to the struggles of the workers. The delegate of the Reading Council referred to its support of an unofficial bus strike, saying that "after consultation with the Transport Union officials and the strike committee," it decided it had a duty to assist on humanitarian grounds. A Coventry delegate said that, when all the members of an organisation affiliated to a local Council were engaged in a dispute, and on the streets without income, the Council had no excuse for existing unless it was prepared to support the workers in their fight.

That should be elementary sense, I think. Can any working-class body, trade union or Trades Council, have any "excuse for existing unless it is prepared to support the workers in their fight?" I can see no answer to the point as it has been put by Mr. Hamilton Fyfe :

Unofficial strikes are unfortunate. They ought not to be necessary, but the people who ought to make them unnecessary are trade union officials. It will not do for these officials, whether branch or headquarters to blame "Communist propaganda" for what are clearly acts provoked by harsh treatment or a feeling that those who do the hardest part of the work are getting the dirty end of the stick. To order them back and not to inquire carefully into the reasons for their coming out is the way not to end unofficial strikes, but to make them more frequent.

It is now time to consider the historical analogy which Sir Walter Citrine seeks to draw, and which no doubt Mr. Bevin would warmly applaud. The point is not without interest, since I cannot conceive an analogy more inaccurately stated. Here it will suffice if we take the period when the modern Labour movement was born, the '80's of last century. Sir Walter need only refer to the Webbs for the classical description of the state of affairs in the trade unions at that time. In the *History of Trade Unionism* he will discover the picture of a trade union leadership which had allowed itself to be "captured and muzzled" by the ruling Liberal capitalists. He will read of the "conversion of the trade union leaders to middle-class views." He will find the movement's historians describing how this "conversion," if it had continued to operate, would have destroyed trade unionism ("reduced the whole trade union organisation to nothing more than a somewhat stagnant department of the Friendly Society movement"). He will observe, finally, that "this danger was averted" by the activity of the Socialists, who led the "New Unionism," progressive, militant, which enabled British trade unionism as a whole to move forward once more.

Just like Sir Walter, the old leaders (Henry Broadhurst, the Secretary of the Trades Union Congress Parliamentary Committee, and his associates) denounced the "tactic of a political party" that was supposed to be aimed at "capturing the Labour movement." Keir Hardie, John Burns, Tom Mann, Ben Tillett were vehemently attacked. Tom Mann had declared that "the trade unionist policy of aggression seems entirely lost sight of." John Burns cried that the existing craft societies had "ceased to be unions for maintaining the rights of labour." Do not these words ring true to-day?

When Mr. Bevin attacks what he calls "disruption" he merely echoes old Broadhurst, the Gladstonian Liberal and bitter anti-Socialist, who attacked "those who spread dissensions in the unions and seek to destroy unionism by vehemently attacking its prominent representatives Their emissaries enter our camp in the guise of friends, in order that they may the better sow the seeds of disruption. Let the workers beware of them. . . . Hound these creatures from our midst!" (speeches at the Dundee Trades Union Congress, 1889). The parallel is even closer. For "Mr. Ernest Bevin warned the annual conference of Trades Councils against the tendency to exploit trade unionism for political ends" (*Daily*

Herald, May 31, 1927), while Henry Broadhurst declared: "I insist upon political freedom and that politics should have nothing to do with trade unionism." Mr. Bevin, in short, seeks to put the clock back half-a-century.

Even stronger than the historical analogy is the historical irony. For Mr. Bevin's union takes its origin from the dockers' and general workers' unions which arose out of the great dock strike of 1889, organised and led by the "disruptive" Socialists who triumphed over the Broadhurst oligarchy. At the Torquay Conference, reports *Reynolds News* (July 11, 1937), "a Scottish delegate . . . pointed to Mr. Ben Tillett, the veteran dockers' leader, and asserted that the members of the Rank-and-File were carrying out the tradition 'for which Ben had fought.' If the union had militant leaders, he said, there would be no need for rank-and-file organisations."

In 1937 the Bevin policy threatens to hamstring the unions as bodies "for maintaining the rights of labour," as did the Broadhurst policy fifty years ago. A commentator in the *New Statesman* notes that "a trade union which outlaws its militants may become in effect no union at all, but merely a convenient piece of machinery for the employers to use in keeping their workers in order" (under cover of Mr. Bevin's favourite phrase "it is imperative to honour our agreements"). That way lie catastrophe and an opening of the road to Fascism. My printers were right. The battle that has now opened between purge and progress is a battle for the life of trade unionism. Let everyone of us get to our action stations.

ALEX GOSSIP'S 75th BIRTHDAY

On September 11th this year Alex Gossip, General Secretary of the National Amalgamated Furnishing Trades Association, celebrates his 75th birthday. Comrade Gossip, well-known as a militant trade unionist who has never swerved from his initial faith, has played a prominent part in the battle for working-class unity, national and international.

The LABOUR MONTHLY takes pleasure in drawing the attention of its readers to the Fund, supported by all sections of the Labour Movement, which has been inaugurated to commemorate Alex Gossip's anniversary.

Contributions should be sent to the Secretary of the Fund, Mr. J. H. Halpin, 72 Albert Street, London, N.W.1.

THE RISING COST OF LIVING

By ROSE SMITH

THE rapid rise in the cost of living apparent during the past twelve months is making serious inroads into the standard of living of the workers. It involves a decrease in real wages of employed workers and in the insurance benefits of unemployed workers. The average increase in wages during 1936 of 3 per cent. has already been swallowed up nearly three times over by the increase in the cost of living. Tens of thousands of British workers are to-day worse off in their period of alleged prosperity than they were during the years of trade depression.

	November, 1936.		May, 1937.		Increase.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
8 loaves	2	0	2	8	0	8
$\frac{3}{4}$ lb. tea	1	0	1	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
4 lb. sugar	0	7	0	9	0	2
2 tins condensed milk ..	0	4	0	5	0	1
1 lb. cheese	0	6	0	9	0	3
1 stone potatoes ..	0	8	1	0	0	4
1 lb. margarine	0	4	0	5	0	1
$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. butter	0	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	6	0	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
4 lb. sausages and mince	2	0	3	0	1	0
2 lb. meat	0	10	1	2	0	4
Soap	0	8	0	10	0	2
2 cwt. coal	2	11	3	5	0	6
$\frac{1}{4}$ stone flake meal ..	0	5	0	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
$\frac{1}{4}$ stone flour	0	5	0	6	0	1
European eggs, per doz.	0	8	0	10	0	2
Or Irish eggs	0	10	1	0	0	2
	14 6 $\frac{1}{2}$		19 2		4 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	

Mr. J. Marchbanks, of the National Union of Railwaymen, recently stated that the 40s. a week paid as wages to thousands of railwaymen is at present only worth 31s. as compared with 1933.

Recent enquiries by the Children's Minimum Council reveal that in many working class houses there are young children who never get any fresh milk. The Council reports that, "In the Cardiff enquiry it was found that in the group of poor working class families 24 per cent. of the children under seven years old were living in households without any supplies of fresh milk."

The budget of an unemployed worker of Glasgow quoted in the *Daily Worker* of June 11, 1937, shows that for this particular family

there was an increase in its weekly expenditure on food alone during May, 1937, as compared with November, 1936. The above table supplied by the worker concerned, indicates how the very meagre diet of this family has increased in price, and how the unemployed are being driven to exist below the "spartan standard" described by Seebohm Rowntree in his latest book, *The Human Needs of Labour*.

Food prices are rising more rapidly in Britain than in any other country in the world. Month after month the retail prices of the essential foodstuffs, clothing and household necessities are going up. Rent and rates have also risen side by side with increased coal and gas charges to the small consumers. There is every prospect of still further rises in retail prices and these increases are rapidly arousing a phenomenal unrest.

The following quotation on wholesale prices, taken from the April issues of the *Economist*, is an indication that prices to the workers will soar still higher in the months immediately ahead. The *Economist* states :

Wholesale prices are rising at an alarming rate. Compared with only twelve months ago, our index number shows that on the average cereals and meat have risen by 22 per cent., and other foods by 15 per cent. Minerals have risen by 26 per cent. and textiles by 15 per cent. Production of numerous goods for civil demand, such as automobiles, domestic wares, constructional steel and machine tools is being slowed down, and deliveries are being postponed for as long as a year ahead in order to satisfy prior demands for armaments.

Yet the Board of Trade returns indicate that side by side with the rapid increase in the cost of living, there has gone on a tremendous increase in the exploitation of all labour. Productivity in all industries has risen between 1932 and 1936 by 39 per cent., taking 1930 as the standard basis. The actual percentage in 1932 was 90 as compared with 124.5 in 1936. The average output of each worker in all industries increased by 19 per cent. or by nearly one fifth from 1932 to 1936. In some of the newer industries, output is well on the way to being doubled. The average individual increased output by workers in the artificial silk industry rose by 64 per cent., in pig iron by 55 per cent., motors and aircraft 43, steel 30, building 24, cotton textiles 23, boots, shoes and leather trades 15, food and tobacco industry 12, coal 13 and chemicals and oils by 7 per cent.

During this period the number of totally unemployed workers has increased from 1,032,198 to 1,716,527, or 16½ per cent. Incidentally, during this period also, the number of accidents to workpeople jumped 41 per cent.

This is the basis of recovery for the big industrialists and those who live on shares—1,500 British public companies show an increase of

52 per cent. in their profits between 1932 and 1936. Class divisions are being increasingly intensified—the millionaire gets richer whilst the worker is still further impoverished.

It is clear that the Government's war policy, involving an expenditure of £1,500,000,000 is also going to place heavily increased burdens on the taxpayers and still further reduce the workers standard of living. Whilst the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made certain concessions to Building Societies and Public Utility Companies escape scot free, the main burden will fall on an undertaking which is run not for profit but on the principle of mutuality. The Government, under pressure from the City of London, has withdrawn its original proposal to tax excess profits in armaments, under the New Defence Contribution, and intends instead to substitute a new form of taxation which will be handed on to the consumers in the shape of increased prices. It should be noted that the method of raising this tax will insure that the Co-operative Societies, which represent the interest of 7½ million worker consumers, will be taxed nearly double the amount proportionately as privately owned concerns.

The building of working class houses by public bodies is being slowed down by as much as 10 per cent. in Lancashire and the Midlands, and over 34 per cent. in outer London, and the cost of building working class houses by at least £30 per house. This again will force up the cost of living to the workers, facing them with a choice of increased rents or lifelong mortgages to the Building Societies.

In view of the war measures, the Government's tariffs and quotas system is likely to be extended rather than curtailed. Businesses in Great Britain have already paid £90,000,000 additional food taxes during the past ten years, according to a recent statement made by Mr. A. V. Alexander, M.P., at a recent Co-operative Congress. The worker is at present paying a tax of ¾d. on every pound of imported beef and veal, 1½d. on every pound of cocoa, 6d. on a pound of tea, 1d. a pound of sugar.

Then, of course, there are the heavy subsidies provided by the rate-payers to shipping merchants, farmers, and big industrialists. Actually the consumers are at present providing approximately £300,000,000 a year for taxes on food and for subsidies to the financial interests involved. The armaments policy of the Government and the proposals made by Sir Robert Horne, Ex-chancellor of the Exchequer, to hold up public works schemes in order to forge ahead with war preparations also indicate further burdens on the workers incomes due to increased taxation and lack of efficient social services, houses, hospitals and schools.

Sir John Boyd Orr's computation that 20,000,000 British workers are underfed is likely to be considerably outdistanced in the near future.

Local public bodies are already expressing alarm at the rise in the cost of living. The food bill of the Manchester Northern Hospital

rose by £800 during 1936. The Salford City Council had before it in March, and prices have risen since then, a motion submitted by its Markets Committee, demanding that action be taken to arrest the rise in food prices. The motion stated, "that in view of the alarming and continued rise in the prices of foodstuffs during recent months, the Council be recommended to express to His Majesty's Government the very grave concern with which they, as a market authority, regard the serious increase in the cost of essential commodities and to press upon the Government the urgent necessity of immediately taking steps to arrest the increase in the price of foodstuffs." The Manchester and District Employment Committee has also recently circulated a document calling upon similar local bodies elsewhere to support the demand for 1s. 6d. per week for each unemployed adult, and 1s. for each dependent, in order to cover the increased cost of living.

Sir Walter Citrine has said that "the trade union movement is getting impatient" with the increased cost of living. Easter and Whitsuntide Trade Union conferences, representing millions of organised workers, passed resolutions demanding increases in wages, pointing out that wage increases during 1934 had already been swallowed up by the rise in the cost of living. Hundreds of thousands of railwaymen and engineers are actually in a worse position than in 1931, and are now demanding the full restoration of the cuts.

The increased cost of living has become one of the main factors in the wages claim of railwaymen, engineers, textile workers, postal workers, boot and shoe operatives and miners. The decision of the London Trades Council, representing 300,000 organised workers, to call a central conference of trade unionists and their wives to plan a campaign to meet the rise in the cost of living, and for a higher permanent standard of life for all workers, is undoubtedly an indication of the general desire for action on this issue. The struggle against the increased cost of living becomes a vital issue for every strata of workers, involving the fight for the 40-hour week, against overtime, for increased wages, against the Government's war preparations, food profiteering and taxation.

REARMAMENT, CAPITALIST PLANNING AND THE DEFORMATION OF CAPITALIST ECONOMY

By JOHN KNIGHT

[This is the third of John Knight's articles on the Economics of Rearmament. Previous articles on the "Financial Consequences of Rearmament." and on "Rearmament and Overproduction" have been published in the June and July issues of the LABOUR MONTHLY.]

A REARMAMENT programme such as Germany and Great Britain have inaugurated cannot be pursued without careful detailed and far-reaching planning. Planning under capitalism? Yes, planning under capitalism! "As soon as there are trusts, planlessness ceases" says Lenin.* And we may add: when rivalry among imperialist powers has reached a stage such as the present one where the Great Powers rearm at a pace similar to that during the last war, and never known before in peace times, then planning and its consequences tend to become decisive for the whole character of capitalist economy.

Planning under capitalism? What then is the difference between capitalist planning and planning such as we observe it in the Soviet Union? The difference is that planning under capitalism increases the economic anarchy prevailing, while planning in the Soviet Union makes economic anarchy impossible.

How does planning under capitalism increase anarchy? Let us take as example a tin trust controlling world production and world distribution of tin. Such a trust or cartel or whatever one calls it fixes the amount of production monthly or quarterly or whenever the regulations of the trust or current events prescribe. The trust also fixes prices, and in addition regulates exports. It seems that the trust regulates everything and is a splendid example for all those who want to explain that capitalism can plan and can therefore save the world from depressions and crises,

*Cf. Report on the Current Situation, delivered at the April Conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, May 7, 1917. *Selected Works*, VI, p. 99. This statement of Lenin must, of course, be taken in conjunction with his further statement quoted later in this article.

if it is only allowed to plan the more important economic activities. But does this planning tin trust really do away with anarchy in the tin industry? Not at all! On the contrary, it increases the anarchy in the tin industry, in the following way: Let us assume the tin magnates or their representatives meet monthly; they, then, find out how stocks are developing, how production and consumption compare, and finally, they decide about production and prices and exports for the next month. If production lags behind consumption they increase the production quota, if stocks are accumulating they vote for a decline in production. Thus, they do nothing else but try to regulate the production of tin according to the consumption of tin. If consumption increases they increase production, and if consumption declines they decrease production. The trust, thus, does nothing but see that production in different countries follows the anarchic movements of consumption. Every firm has to follow the command of the supreme council of the tin industry; they have to walk into the crisis step by step in an orderly manner. The only thing which the trust plans is the regularity of the steps the different tin concerns are taking; but where these steps lead to, whether to increased or decreased production does not depend upon the decision of the trust; for the trust obeys the demand, and the demand for tin is just as anarchic as before, when no trust existed. Planning, thus, has not led to a cessation of anarchy; it has simply assured a solid following of tin producers along the erratic course which anarchic consumption dictates to them. But that is not all. One must go further and realise that the planning of production has increased the anarchy of consumption. For, a decline in consumption is often slowed up by a rapid decrease in prices because of price cutting among competing concerns. A trust, however, keeps prices up and thus depresses consumption even more, and in consequence also production; unemployment increases rapidly, general purchasing power declines steeply and the crisis becomes worse and worse. In this way anarchy is increased, and crises are accentuated by the planful action of trusts.

The question here arises whether one might not also control consumption of tin. But how can one control the consumption of tin, since tin is used in a great number of industries? By planning all industry, by creating a gigantic super trust over all industry, some may answer. This idea of a super trust is not a new one. Bucharin, in his studies of finance capitalism, written about twenty years ago, has already developed the idea of a super trust, the idea of organised capitalism. But this idea has no foundation in the reality of capitalist society. If we study the history of the different trusts formed during the last thirty years we find that after some time each of them breaks up again, to be reformed after some time again or to be abandoned altogether. For competition remains one of the constituents, one of the driving forces of capitalist

economy, and competition, outsiders, racketeers, promoters, again and again succeed in breaking up trusts which seemed "built for eternity." Lenin said: "Nowhere in the world has monopoly capitalism existed in a whole series of branches without free competition, nor will it exist. To write of such a system is to write of a system which is divorced from reality and false."*

In the highest stage of capitalist development, in the phase of monopoly capitalism there will always be planning, but this planning cannot diminish the anarchy of capitalist economy; on the contrary, planning under capitalism intensifies capitalist anarchy. The idea of a general plan for capitalist economy, which might diminish anarchy, is abstract and has no foundation in reality since it does not take into account that as long as there is capitalism there will be competition.

* * * *

The greater the sphere under planned control the greater the anarchy in capitalist society, for it results in greater pressure upon those parts of capitalist economy which are not under planned control, and at the same time in greater resistance by the competitive sphere of capitalist economy against the monopolistic sphere.

Monopolism, that is capitalist planning in Great Britain, was until shortly less advanced than, for instance, in the United States or Germany. But during the last ten years Britain has made rapid progress. The iron and steel industry, especially, has tended towards strict monopolist organisation and the enormous rearmament programme of the present Government will support this process of monopolisation considerably.

The rearmament programme is one of the most far reaching attempts of British capitalism in planning. It represents a rapid step forward in "the process of transformation of monopoly capitalism into state-monopoly-capitalism."† *Realising that the rearmament programme represents one of the most important planning attempts under capitalism we realise at the same time that it represents one of the most important factors in intensifying the anarchy of capitalist production in this country.*

* * * *

The reader may by this time be anxious, after reading so many pages of theoretical discussion, to turn to the realities of British economy. The following paragraphs should satisfy this demand. All quotations refer to the consequences of the rearmament programme, that is of rearmament planning upon different branches of industry and trade:

*On the Party Programme. Report delivered at the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, March 19, 1919. *Selected Works*, VIII, p. 338.

†Lenin. Preface to first edition of *The State and Revolution*. *Selected Works*, Vol. VII, p. 5.

It was announced to-day that Mr. Leslie Burgin, Minister of Transport, had told a deputation that the time to consider schemes for road bridges over the Forth and Tay would be when the pressure of defence needs was less great. (*Evening Standard*, June 18, 1937.)

Materials for making a Belisha crossing were ordered, but because of the armaments programme there was difficulty in getting them. (A solicitor to Hastings Corporation, *Daily Herald*, May 8, 1937.)

The Pressed Steel Company has been endeavouring to broaden the basis of its business, and has gone into the manufacture of refrigerators with considerable success. It seems possible, however, that companies of this sort may be affected by the steel shortage and the diversion of supplies to more urgent needs. (*Evening Standard*, June 29, 1937.)

The output of pig-iron last month, though well maintained, again fell far short of consumers' requirements and the system of rationing supplies continued to be applied. Deliveries were greatly in arrears. New business was practically ruled out, and consumers attended the markets with little hope of placing any except for odd lots that might come on offer. . . .

Re-rollers were again unable to obtain sufficient material to enable them to run their plant steadily, and spasmodic working was the rule. Their heavy bookings warranted continuous production, and orders on offer were plentiful, but few could be entertained in view of the uncertainty of supplies. . . .

Whilst there has so far been no sensible diminution of the flow or orders, shipowners are considering very carefully whether it would pay them to build at present prices, and in at least one case a large building programme has been curtailed on account of the increased costs."

(*Westminster Bank Review*, June, 1937.)

Birmingham: Re-rollers are finding the scarcity of billets seriously affecting output. Practically all consumers are being rationed, and preference is given to Government requirements. . . .

Bristol: Expansion of output (by the engineering industries, J.K.) is curtailed by shortage of raw materials. The number of firms working in connection with the rearmament programme is increasing. . . .

Glasgow: Including the two battleships, the contracts amounted in value to approximately £18 millions. Most firms, however, are so busy that a good many of the recent contracts will not be started for several months. (*Lloyds Bank, Monthly Review*, June, 1937.)

Our export trade in agricultural implements has been completely held up, and our home market is being starved because we cannot get steel which is going to the armaments industry. (*Daily Herald*, June 30, 1937.)

The shortage of metals of all kinds may result in substantial changes in the aircraft industry—there is likely to be a return to the use of wood. (*Evening Standard*, June 30, 1937.)

Finally, we cite a story not out of "raw material starved" Germany, not taken from a paper twenty years old, but from the *Evening Standard*, June 30, 1937. The heading of the article is: "There is Money in Old Iron," and the opening sentences run as follows:

British householders, farmers and manufacturers will be asked to sell any old iron they possess. The appeal is to be launched by the British steel industry.

Next day, the *Daily Telegraph* followed :

National Search for Old Iron—Steel Trade Shortage.

A search for scrap iron is to be made all over Britain. The present record steel output has created such a shortage of raw material that British manufacturers are to co-operate with the scrap iron and steel merchants in an appeal for "old iron" from households, farms and estates and works up and down the country.

On the same day the *Daily Herald* reports in a style meant to be amusing:

Any old iron? 8,000,000 tons needed.

Old saucepans, broken bedsteads, disused fenders, all that "junk" you've got stored in the back room, will be wanted next week.

Lorries will come in search of it to help in the Government's rearmament drive; for there is not sufficient steel available to make arms and meet the needs of normal industry.

I think these quotations are enough to convince anybody of the deformation of British capitalist economy through the rearmament programme. Difficulties in all industries which work with iron and steel, whether they produce agricultural implements, refrigerators, ships, cutlery, automobiles, or whatnot. The British steel industry appealing to the population to sell its old iron! The execution of "civil" orders postponed again and again because the rearmament programme requires the available materials!

British rearmament proceeds comparatively well according to plan. The state has a "monopoly right" on all the materials available, on all the labour force available, on all the production facilities available. But the rigid adherence to this plan for rearmament production is upsetting the rest of industrial production. Production for non-armament purposes is completely out of gear—and the present stage is only the beginning. We have the example of Germany before us and we can see very well what will happen in Great Britain. The aircraft industry is already returning to wood because of the steel shortage—for private and commercial planes only, of course—just as in Germany some time ago special regulations for house building were issued relaxing the rules previously in force, which had secured a certain solidity of building. Because of the steel shortage in Germany, the share of private house building in the total building activity is to be cut down to one fourth of what it was last year. The fears of a possible collapse of the building boom in this country because of declining "purchasing desire" on the part of the consumers can be allayed. They will not have any opportunity to give proof of their "declining purchasing desire" because the number of houses built for private use will decline rapidly anyway, in consequence

of the steel shortage. While some industries will expand immensely, others will contract in the face of a generally rising level of production and prices because of lack of raw materials, of trained labour power, etc. The employers are already aware of what is happening. In the May issue of the monthly production of the Federation of British Industries, *British Industries*, we find already a small notice under the heading "Rearmament Programme and Industrial Distortion," and this will only be the first of a whole series of similar headings which we shall see in the press during the months and years to come.

The rearmament programme, this gigantic planned capitalist undertaking, does not avert a crisis, as many capitalists hope. On the contrary, it distorts and deforms capitalist economy to such a degree that already to-day the crisis is preparing and, not only that, it is openly breaking out in a number of concerns, trade branches, and whole industries. For capitalist planning means nothing but intensification of the anarchy in capitalist industry, and doubly so if this planning proceeds on a scale as large as that presented by the rearmament programme.

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THE SOVIET UNION AND THE WORLD TO-DAY

By GORE GRAHAM

DURING recent months the Soviet Union has been subjected to campaigns of slander greater in extent and more poisonous in character than perhaps any that preceded them. It is not so much that attempts have been made to belittle or dispute Soviet achievements. The endeavours of a Colonel Blimp like Marcus Samuel on the one hand, and Trotsky and his followers on the other, to deny the economic and cultural achievements of the Soviet Union do not cut much ice. Consequently, the principal aims of the slander campaigns have been rather to persuade people that the Soviet Union is (1) not a Socialist State (2) not a democratic country, and (3) that it is not a force for peace.

Since the strength and power of the Soviet Union are accomplished facts which even the cleverest enemies find to-day exceedingly difficult to deny, other methods have to be employed. When some Soviet achievement has been quite indisputable, capitalist propagandists have sought to alienate popular sympathy from the Soviet Union by arguing that it was not Socialism. During the past year this technique has been used to an unprecedented extent. Everywhere the Trotskyists have come forward as the powder-monkeys of all who campaign against the Soviet Union. The Fascist, Conservative, Liberal and Labour press has made great use of the slanderous material of the Trotskyists. Great Liberal journals like the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, influential Labour papers like the *Daily Herald* and *Het Volk*, together with scores of popular boulevard newspapers, have given a great deal of space to the anti-Soviet poison of Trotskyism.

The vast mass of normal, practical-minded people in the Socialist and peace movements in the different countries have not been particularly affected. For one thing they see very clearly that apart from any question of the content of their arguments, the Trotskyists are like the Fascists in that they are devoured by one consuming passion—hatred of the Soviet Union and the Communist Parties. Those interested in peace are not easily shaken from their profound conviction that, whatever anyone may say, the Soviet Union is opposed to war, and is willing to contribute to the defence of peace. Those interested in Socialism are not easily shaken from their conviction that, whatever anyone may say,

the Soviet Union is ruled by the workers who seized power in battle against capitalism and who have maintained their power and the integrity of their State against a capitalist world for twenty years.

At the same time there are some liberals and intellectuals who fall victims to the Trotskyist toxin. They do not realise that Trotskyism is a weapon of Fascism, the forces of war against the Soviet Union, against peace and socialism. In the Soviet Union Trotskyism is a conspiracy of assassins assisting Fascism. In other countries it is a source of disruption and despair, an anti-communist, anti-Soviet force inside the working-class and peace movements. The principal reason why a number of Liberals have failed to understand recent events in the Soviet Union is because they do not understand the realities of these days in which we are living. In regard to many essentials they live in a world of yesterday. They do not grasp the meaning of Fascism as a ferocious expression of class decay. They do not see the Soviet Revolution as the success of Socialism achieved by painful struggle in a land still surrounded by a capitalist world.

Stalin has criticised many persons in the Soviet Union for their failure to appreciate the fact that the Soviet Union is encircled by capitalism. The same criticism must be made of many Socialists in other countries. These people do not appreciate what this fact involves. It is a new phenomenon of which their early training gave them no warning. An illustration of what is meant is given by the different reactions to the trial of Tukhachevsky by the Socialists in Czechoslovakia and the leaders of Socialist parties elsewhere. In Czechoslovakia—itsself practically encircled by Fascism, living daily under the threat of destruction at the hands of Hitler—the Socialist and other leaders are very close to reality. They do not approach the Tukhachevsky question with out-of-date concepts. The danger of war is not a phrase of varying significance to them. They do not question the activities of Hitler's agents in other countries ; they do not doubt the treachery of Tukhachevsky. The realities of these our days are too close upon them to leave room for the old ideas.

It is different with many liberals in countries like our own. These persons do not see that in a number of important ways, the war against the Soviet Union is on. A Fascist assault on the citadel of everything which Fascism opposes—socialism, culture and democracy—is not yet being waged by means of open war on the U.S.S.R. It has begun rather in the Fascist aggression against Spain. Our liberal friends have never appreciated this new phenomenon in history, this successful revolution which not only wrested power from the hands of the Russian capitalists, but has maintained itself for twenty years and is constructing a new civilisation against the opposition of the ever-more-distracted Old World.

They have always approached this factor with old conceptions that have had no real application. Being, in the majority of cases, scholars and intellectuals, who live so much of their lives in the realm of the written word, they spin themselves away from reality and subsist largely on the phrase, the concept.

They write of "State power" but do not realise it as the application of force ; they think of the building of Socialism, but do not think of that as constructive work in enterprises guarded by armed sentries ; they think of socialising agriculture, but never conceive of its reality as a veritable civil war against the forces of backwardness in which to gain happiness for ninety millions a half million must suffer ; they think of the division of the world into a Socialist and capitalist States, but never concretely visualise this in all the forms of antagonism and struggle which constitute its reality. It is very significant that they are so ready to cry "We cannot believe" They cannot believe ; because they cannot understand.

For example, Mr. Brailsford, whose sincerity no one doubts, declares he cannot believe that Zinoviev, Tukhachevsky and the others were traitors to their country, he cannot believe that in the Soviet Union there are numerous spies, wreckers and diversionists. And being a writer who is expected to say something about the matter, as well as an independent spirit who feels impelled to speak his mind, he expresses this disbelief. At every important and critical development of the Soviet Union and its relations with other countries extremely well-intentioned people like Mr. Brailsford have gone off the rails. Without having the slightest desire to do so they have put themselves in the same anti-Soviet camp as the reactionaries and the Fascists. Why ? Because things have happened that—belonging to our day—were not dreamt of in their philosophy.

How much better it would be if Mr. Brailsford and others instead of studying such things as the forged "Stalin Memorandum" studied the work of the meeting of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U., held last March. This meeting was the first plenum after the adoption of the Soviet constitution. It was also held after the recent trials had revealed the extent of enemy activity inside the Soviet Union. The new Soviet Constitution marked a turning point in the political life of the Soviet people. It provided a further democratisation of the electoral system by the introduction of the secret ballot, direct, equal and universal suffrage, the Referendum, and so on. All this—itself a political reflection of the social, economic and cultural progress of the Soviet people—meant a further strengthening of the political activity of the mass of the people, extending the base of the dictatorship of the working class and drawing more people into the governing of the country.

What did this mean to the Communist Party? It meant that if the Party intended to be at the head of the new, thoroughly democratic elections it was essential (in the words of the resolution adopted by the Central Committee Meeting)

that the Party itself should consistently practise democracy, that it should carry out to the end in the inner life of the Party the principles of democratic centralism, as is demanded by the statutes of the Party, that it should itself possess the necessary conditions whereby all the organs of the Party would be elective, that criticism and self-criticism should develop to the full extent, that the responsibility of the Party organs before the mass of the Party membership should be complete, and that the mass of the Party membership itself should be fully activated.

Suiting the action to the word the meeting decided on a whole number of measures to improve the internal democracy of the Party. These included the introduction of the secret ballot, the abolition of co-option on to Party committees, the prohibition of voting by lists, the injunction to observe strictly the statutes of the Party, the holding of regular general meetings. The meeting made extensive criticism of existing weaknesses, and revealed that outstanding determination to achieve the completest measure of real democracy penetrating every corner of Soviet life which animates the leaders of the country. I should think that anyone at all interested in democracy, who reads the proceedings of this meeting of the leading committee of the Russian Communist Party, and particularly the speeches of Stalin, the report of Zhdanov and the resolution adopted, cannot come to any other conclusion than that here is the very stuff of democracy, that the sentiments expressed and the measures decided on represent the quintessence of democratic good sense. They must surely afford welcome sustenance to the democrat's belief in the future of democracy at a time when elsewhere democratic liberties are being either gulped by Fascist tigers or gnawed at by "democratic" mice.

Let us consider the criticisms of existing weaknesses which were made at the meeting of the Central Executive Committee, for here we can get much help in properly understanding the recent trials. Why was it that the work of wrecking and spying by agents of foreign countries, including Trotskyists, had achieved as much success as the murder of Kirov and the evidence of the recent trials revealed that it had achieved? For one thing there had been considerable political carelessness. This had been manifest in many ways. There was the complacency arising from the mistaken belief that in proportion as the forces of the Soviet Union grew the enemy would become tamer and more inoffensive. There was "gaping, carelessness, complacency, blindness" as a result of Party members being carried away by economic successes. Preoccupied by the work of economic construction they had neglected political questions which Bolsheviks have no right to forget. They had forgotten that the

Soviet Union is only one-sixth of the world and is surrounded by capitalist States, some of whom are feverishly preparing for war in pursuit of their loudly proclaimed aim of ridding the world of Bolshevism. They had forgotten that if in "peaceful" relations between capitalist States each country is full of the spies and agents of other countries then three or four times as many agents and spies can be expected to operate in the U.S.S.R.

Stalin was very emphatic on the dangers of the very successes, for these had produced "a narcotic atmosphere of swelled-headedness and self satisfaction" which gave rise to feelings of carelessness and created an atmosphere of showy triumphs and mutual congratulations, killing the sense of proportion, dulling the political interest, taking the spring out of the people and impelling them to rest on their laurels. All this had resulted in an absence of political vigilance. Because the Trotskyists were so extremely few it was felt that they could present no danger, for it was not realised that, in Stalin's words, "tens of thousands of workers have to be set to work to build a Dneiprostroi, but it requires, perhaps, not more than a few dozen men to blow it up. Several Red Army corps may be necessary to win a battle during war time. But it only needs a few spies somewhere in the Army headquarters, or even a divisional staff, to steal the plan of operations and pass it on to the enemy, for this gain to be lost."

Good leadership, the meeting emphasised, must not merely teach, but should also learn from the masses. Following the self-critical analysis of existing shortcomings the Central Committee adopted measures to remove them. It emphasised that to the old slogan of The Mastery of Technique must be added the slogan of The Mastery of Bolshevism. It stated that to achieve its aims only one thing was necessary—to liquidate political carelessness, complacency and shortsightedness.

Immediately after the Central Committee meeting a wave of self-criticism swept over the whole of the Soviet people and an enormous increase in political vigilance took place. The excellent work of the Commissariat for Home Affairs, under the leadership of Yezhov, has resulted in rooting out conspiratorial elements right to the high command of the Red Army. With the arrest and trial of Tukhachevsky and the other generals it can be presumed that the Bolsheviks have now almost completed the work of rendering harmless all the diversive, spying and terrorist elements in the country.

Soviet democracy has also shown itself superior to the democracy of other countries in its ability promptly to defend itself against the internal activities of Fascism. Mr. Wickham Steed tells us in the *Spectator* (July 17, 1937) that he has learned that the "executions of the Russian

Generals caused consternation in the higher command of the German Reichswehr." We can believe it. The *Times*, which although it is not a little George Washington, will hardly lie for the advantage of the Soviet Union, says that the trials represent a consolidation of Soviet power.

What a pity that Mr. Brailsford and others can appreciate the reality of the Fascist encirclement of republican Spain, but not the capitalist encirclement of the U.S.S.R., can see what Fascism is *doing* in Spain and disbelieve even its preparations to do the same in the Soviet Union. What a pity that they can appreciate the Soviet Union as a fighter for world peace and as the only country that has really come to the aid of Spanish democracy, and yet believe such ridiculous things about the same group of people in regard to Soviet internal affairs. And, finally, what a pity that they know so little about the real character and history of the Soviet Republics and the Bolsheviks that they never once ask themselves: "Has there ever been an instance in which the Bolshevik Party has sought to cheat history, to perpetrate a fraud that could win momentary success at the cost of eventual damnation?" There never has.

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IMMIGRANT PLANTATION LABOUR IN CEYLON

[In the July issue of the LABOUR MONTHLY we published an article entitled For Socialism in Ceylon, a statement submitted to the Conference on Socialism in India and Ceylon held in London, June, 1937. This month we print a further informative statement submitted on the same occasion.]

THE term plantation labour refers to Indian workers imported into Ceylon by direct Government supervision under the special Immigrant Labour Ordinances.

According to the Government statistics of 1935 there are about 775,000 men, women and children who are controlled by these ordinances. They form about 17 per cent. of the whole population. They are by law treated as aliens who have no right of asylum in Ceylon except when under a contract to work in the tea and rubber plantations. It is a penal offence for them to remain in Ceylon if they are unable to find employment as immigrant labourers in registered estates.

Over 50 per cent. of these labourers were born in Ceylon and have lived there for two or three generations and have lost all connection with their homes in India. Yet the moment they are discharged from the estates they are put under arrest by the police and sent to a detention camp for what is called compulsory repatriation in India.

Ninety-five per cent. of the 557,000 acres of tea in Ceylon are worked by this system of labour and about 85 per cent. of the plantations are owned by the British. The British Co-operative Wholesale Society is one of the biggest owners. Tea forms over 60 per cent. of the total value of the export trade of Ceylon. Apart from the ownership of the commodity itself, British interests have the monopoly of the shipping trade and financing of the tea industry. In addition to this, about 60 per cent. of the rubber plantations are owned by British capital and are largely worked by Indian labour.

The starting point of the system of the Indian Immigrant labour was the abolition of slavery in 1833 which prevented the opening up of estates by feudal slavery. From the employers' point of view this new system was more profitable and more efficient than the employment of African slaves could have been and from the labourer's point of view equally degrading and sometimes more inhumanely cruel than slavery.

Indian Nationalists started an agitation against this new institution of slavery and roused the indignation of all liberal elements. In 1839 the British Government was compelled to ban Indian immigration. But the pressure from the British capitalists was too powerful for the spirit of liberalism and in 1847 the ban was lifted, and the traffic in human lives restarted. South Africa, Mauritius, West India, Malaya and Ceylon were the countries which imported most of this labour. Again after prolonged agitation by Indian Nationalists the Indian Government was compelled to legislate on behalf of Indian immigrants and the Immigration Act of India of 1922 came into force. By this act "Immigration was unlawful except to such countries and on such terms and conditions as are laid down by the Government of India."

The machinery of the Ceylon and the Indian Governments are working very effectively to supply the plantations with an unlimited supply of able-bodied men and women for the estates. The chief recruiting agent is appointed by the Ceylon Government and his headquarters are at Trichinopoly in South India, the centre for this human traffic.

He has his four assistants at Salam, Vellore, Mandapam and Trichinopoly. Two quarantine camps are established at the Indian ports from which this human merchandise is shipped to Ceylon. The main function of the Medical officers at these camps is to select the able-bodied and their families and to reject the sick and infirm. These men and women are collected by paid agents, the Kanganis, who act on a commission basis. A money advance to defray the cost of the bare needs during the journey and liberal promises of quick reward are sufficient to entice these poverty-stricken peasants to leave their homes in search of work. Being victims of British imperialism and driven into desperation through starvation, these peasants become a ready prey to the unscrupulous Kanganis.

In 1934, 140,607 of these peasants were imported to Ceylon and in 1935, 43,018. Permits are issued by the Ceylon Government for the recruitment on application by the employers' organisation. The labourers have to enter into a monthly contract of service which in practice means they are daily paid labourers who receive their wages once in four or six weeks. The labourer must give a month's notice before he leaves the estate. The breach of this contract by the labourer is a penal offence. The employer can expel a labourer from the estate without notice on payment of a month's wage. The planters have devised a very efficient system to keep the labourers in virtual slavery by the Discharge Certificate System which was introduced to replace the less efficient Tundu system. No employer who is a party to this agreement is at liberty to employ a labourer who does not produce a Discharge Certificate or comes from an estate which is not a party to this agreement. This is a convention among the planters and has received the indirect sanction of law.

Perhaps the best comment on the practice is in the annual report of the European Planters' Association for 1933. It states that :

The Discharge Certificate agreement, though excellent in principle, proved to be open to abuse which could not be controlled This Agreement was undoubtedly being made use of by the Kanganis as security against money advanced to labourers and the evils of the old advance system threatened to reappear.

Thus it will be seen that although the labourer is free from arrest for debt, and his freedom of movement was protected in 1921 when the Tundu system was abolished, he is still in bondage.

The official witness before the Royal Commission of labour stated that "The Indian labourer is born in debt, lives in debt and dies in debt."

* * * *

The minimum wage fixed by law for Immigrant labourers is 40 cents. or 7d. a day for an adult and 26 cents. or 4d. a day for a child on an 8-hour day. The employer is also compelled by law to give employment on six days in the week as the calculations were on the basis that all the members of the average family were wage earners who worked six days in the week. For the purpose of fixing the minimum wage the family budget was prepared by the Director of Statistics, the Controller of Labour and the Agent of the Government of India, all high officials, the first two being Europeans and the third an Indian Civil servant. All luxuries were excluded from this Budget for no provision is made for toddy, the local beer, and tobacco, although several estates have liquor taverns established by special permission in areas where prohibition by local option exists. Plenty of rice is provided for in the budget but of meat there is but half-a-pound a month as well as three-halfpenny worth of vegetables. For clothing one shilling is allowed and this he is almost compelled to spend on British cloth as the unlimited importation of cheap foreign cloth is prohibited by Whitehall. In 1930 this budget estimate was reduced by 17 per cent. and the minimum wage reduced accordingly.

The gross inadequacy of the minimum wage when compared with the cost of living can be realised by the fact that the daily wage of a labourer in 1850 was the same as in 1937, when the cost of living was several hundred per cent. lower. Outrageous as this minimum wage is, in actual fact the labourer's monthly earnings are far below it. In his official report for 1935 the Indian Agent states : "Though the employers are obliged by law to give work for six days in the week to labourers on estates, no action was taken against employers who could not give work to the labourers for a sufficient number of days in the week. Till about November many estates were able to provide only three or four days' work in the week."

The *per capita* rate paid to the Kanganis called the pence money which amounts to about $\frac{3}{4}$ d. a day has to come out from the 7d. wage. As the

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labourer is paid their starvation wage only once in about six weeks, they are compelled to buy their food and other necessities on credit. While the minimum wage has in actual practice only worked out as the maximum wage, the maximum price at which the employer was compelled to supply rice to the labourers has remained at the minimum price. In many estates the labourers are compelled to buy their rice from the estate at Rs.4.80 a bushel, while the same could be bought at Rs.2 in the open market. Thus the estate profiteers on the food of the labourers by over 100 per cent.

* * * *

Indian labourers have no rights in local Government matters, but they enjoy in theory full adult franchise for the State Council elections. The social and economic conditions under which they live, however, make them so dependent on the employers that free exercise of their political rights has resulted in the worst forms of persecution.

At the last State Council elections, two of the labourer's own representatives from the intelligentsia were returned by large majorities in two constituencies which almost entirely consist of Indian labourers. Two European planters contested them. Coercive methods were openly employed by the planters, but in spite of all the terrorism the labourers made use of the secret ballot with a surprising degree of courage and political wisdom. The two candidates were not allowed to enter the estates to canvas. One of them was unable to rent out an office anywhere in the constituency. He slept in his car and all his election campaign work was done by the roadside. Even up to this day, a year after the election, this member has not been able to rent an office room in the chief town in his constituency and is not allowed to visit the labourers in their homes.

The employers are very efficiently organised. The Planters' Association, with the Governor as patron, control the Government policy with regard to the employer. The European business houses in Colombo act as the agents for the proprietors in England. These business houses have the full monopoly of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce. The Ceylon Association in London, an exclusively European body which represents the British vested interests in Ceylon, controls policy through the Colonial office in Whitehall. The European planters are a highly organised military body. The Planters' Rifle Corps are exclusively British units in the Ceylon Defence Force. Ceylonese are excluded on racial grounds although the total cost of training and maintenance is born by the Ceylon Government.

The labourers, on the other hand, have no organisation whatsoever. Any attempt to organise them is crushed by the employers and the whole machinery of government is invoked to prevent labourers from organising themselves.

LENIN AND GORKY

[*This new series of Lenin's Letters which have been specially translated for the LABOUR MONTHLY commenced in the July issue. They are selected from Lenin's important correspondence with Maxim Gorky.*]

No. 209.

To A. M. Gorky at Capri (Italy).
(February 25, 1908. Geneva.)

Dear A.M.,

I did not reply to your letter immediately because, on account of your article¹ or in some connection with it there arose, strange as it may seem at first sight, quite a serious tussle between me and Al. Al. on the editorial committee. . . . Hm, hm, . . . I was speaking *not in the place* nor for the reason you thought !

The affair arose thus.

The book, "Outlines of the Philosophy of Marxism"² has doubly embittered the old differences of opinion among the bolsheviks about questions of philosophy. I do not consider myself sufficiently competent in these questions to rush into print. But I have always followed our *party* debates on philosophy attentively—beginning with Plekhanov's struggle against Mikhailovsky and Co. at the end of the 'eighties and up to 1895, then his struggle with the Kantians in 1898 and the following years (in this case I not only followed it, but to some extent also took part as a member of the editorial board of *Zarya*³ from 1900), and finally his struggle with the empiriocritics and co.

I have followed Bogdanov's works on philosophy, beginning with his energetic book on "A Historical View of Nature,"⁴ which I studied during my time in Siberia. For Bogdanov this position was only a transition to other philosophical views. I made his personal acquaintance in 1904, when we immediately made presentations to each other: I of my "Steps,"⁵ he of one of his philosophical works *of that time*.⁶ And I immediately (in the spring or early summer of 1904) wrote to him at Paris from Geneva, saying that by his writings he had doubly dissuaded me from accepting the correctness of his views and doubly persuaded me of the correctness of Plekhanov's views.

When Plekhanov and I were working together, we more than once talked about Bogdanov. Plekhanov explained to me the erroneous nature of Bogdanov's views, but thought that this deviation was by no means desperately serious. I well remember that in the summer of 1903 Plekhanov and I, on behalf of the editorial board of "*Zarya*," chatted in Geneva with a delegate from the editorial board of "Outlines of a

realistic world outlook,"⁷ when *we agreed* to collaborate, I—on the agrarian question, and Plekhanov *on philosophy against Mach*. Plekhanov made his attack on Mach *a condition* of his collaboration, which condition the delegate of the editorial board of "Outlines" fully accepted. Plekhanov then looked upon Bogdanov as an ally in the struggle with revisionism, but as an ally who was erring in so far as he was a follower of Ostwald and further of Mach.⁸

In the summer and autumn of 1904 I definitely became close friends with Bogdanov, as *bolsheviks*, and concluded that unspoken pact, tacitly excluding philosophy as neutral territory, which existed throughout the revolution, and enabled us both to introduce into the revolution that tactic of revolutionary social democracy (bolshevism), which I am deeply convinced was the only right one.

There was little occasion to be occupied with philosophy in the fever of revolution. In prison at the beginning of 1906 Bogdanov wrote yet another work—I think, the third instalment of "Empiriomonism." In the summer of 1906 he presented me with a copy and I settled down to study it attentively. Having read it I got extraordinarily angry and enraged: it was now still more clear to me that he was travelling an ultra-erroneous, not Marxist, road. I wrote him then a "declaration of love," a little letter on philosophy the size of three exercise books. In it I made it clear to him that I am of course a *rank and file* Marxist in philosophy, but that it was his clear, popular, excellently written works that had persuaded me finally that he was essentially wrong and Plekhanov right. I showed these little exercise books to certain friends (Luna-charsky among them) and thought of printing them under the title: "Notes of a rank-and-file Marxist on philosophy," but I did not carry out the plan. Now I am sorry that I did not immediately print it then. I wrote some days ago to Petersburg asking them to find and send me these exercise books.

Now "Outlines of the Philosophy of Marxism" has appeared. I have read all the articles except the one by Suvorov (which I am reading), and with each article I have been in a perfect fury of indignation. No, this is not Marxism! And our empiriocritics, empiriomonists and empiriosymbolists are getting into the mire. To assure the reader that "belief" in the reality of the external world is "mysticism" (Bazarov), to confound in the most disgusting fashion materialism and Kantianism (Bazarov and Bogdanov), to preach a variety of agnosticism (empirio-criticism) and idealism (empiriomonism)—to teach the workers "religious atheism" and "adoration" of the supreme human potentialities (Luna-charsky)—to declare that Engels' teaching on dialectics is mysticism (Berman)—to draw upon the stinking source of the French "positivists"—agnostics or metaphysicists (the devil knows what) with "a symbolical

theory of cognition" (Yushkevich)! No, that is a bit too much. Of course, we rank-and-file Marxists are people who are not well-read in philosophy—but why insult us to the extent of presenting such a thing to us as the philosophy of Marxism! I would sooner let myself be quartered than agree to take part in an organ or in an editorial group preaching such things.

I was drawn again to my "Notes of a rank-and-file Marxist on Philosophy" and I began to write them,⁹ but—in the process of my reading the "Outlines"—I of course expounded my impressions to Al. Al.-ch directly and roughly.

You will ask, what has your article to do with that? Just this, that at the very time when these dissensions among the bolsheviks threaten to become particularly sharp, you openly begin to expound the views of one tendency in your work for *The Proletarian*. I do not of course know how and what you would have made of it as a whole. Besides, I consider that an artist can draw much of value for himself from any philosophy. Finally, I completely and unconditionally agree that in questions of artistic creation it rests with you to decide that and, deducing this kind of opinion both from your artistic experience *and from philosophy even if idealistic*, you may arrive at conclusions which will bring great profit to the workers' party. All that is so. And nevertheless, *The Proletarian* must remain absolutely neutral in regard to all our dissensions on philosophy, not giving the readers *the slightest cause* to connect the bolsheviks, as a movement, as the tactical line of the revolutionary wing of the Russian Social-Democrats, with empiriocriticism or empiriomonism.

When, having read and re-read your article, I told Al. Al.-ch that I was against inserting it, he turned darker than a cloud. Over us there really hung the atmosphere of a split. Yesterday we assembled our editorial trio at a special sitting for discussion of the question. There came unexpectedly to our aid a certain stupid affair in the review "Neue Zeit." In No. 20 an unknown translator published an article by Bogdanov on Mach, and in an introduction blurted out that the disagreements between Plekhanov and Bogdanov have a tendency among Russian Social Democrats to become a *fractional* disagreement between bolsheviks and mensheviks! By so writing, the fool (whether man or woman) who wrote this introduction united us. We immediately agreed that a declaration of our neutrality was now absolutely necessary in the very next number of *The Proletarian*. That corresponded in the highest degree with my own feeling after the publication of "The Outlines." We drew up the declaration, unanimously approved it, and to-morrow it will appear in No. 21 of *The Proletarian* and will be sent to you.¹⁰

With regard to your article, it was decided to postpone the question, explaining the whole situation of the matter to you in a letter from each of the three editors of *The Proletarian* and pushing forward my and Bogdanov's visit to you.

So you will get a letter from Al. Al. and from the third editor about whom I have written to you once before.

I consider it necessary to tell you my opinion quite frankly. I now consider some struggle among the bolsheviks on the question of philosophy quite unavoidable. But to split on account of that would be stupid in my opinion. We have formed a *bloc* to carry through a certain tactic in the workers' party. We have carried out this tactic and are still doing so *without dissension* (the only disagreement was on the boycott of the Third Duma), but this firstly never went so far among us as to reach even the suggestion of a split ; and secondly, it did not correspond with the difference of opinion between materialists and Machists, for the Machist Bazarov, for example, was, like me, against the boycott and wrote a long article on it in *The Proletarian*.

To hinder the work of carrying through the tactic of the revolutionary social democracy in the workers' party for the sake of disputes regarding materialism and machism would be unforgivable stupidity in my opinion. We must fight over philosophy in such a way as to ensure that *The Proletarian* and the bolsheviks, as a fraction of the *party*, are not affected by it. And that is quite possible.

And in my opinion you ought to help in this. And you can help by working in *The Proletarian* on neutral (that is, in no way connected with philosophy) questions of literary criticism, journalism and artistic creation and so on. You ought, however, to alter your article, if you want to prevent a split and to help to localise the new quarrel ; and to transfer elsewhere everything even indirectly connected with Bogdanov's philosophy. You, glory be, can write for other organs besides *The Proletarian*. Everything not connected with Bogdanov's philosophy—and a large part of the article is not connected with it—should be expounded in a series of articles for *The Proletarian*. Different conduct on your part, that is, a refusal to change the article or a refusal to collaborate in *The Proletarian* will in my opinion unavoidably lead to intensification of the conflict among the bolsheviks, will make it difficult to localise this new quarrel and will weaken the urgent practically and politically necessary work of the revolutionary Social Democrats in Russia.

Such is my opinion. I have told you all that I think, and now I shall await your answer.

We wanted to set out on our visit to you to-day, but it transpired that we must postpone the visit for not less than a week—and perhaps for two or three.

I warmly shake your hand,

Yours,

N. LENIN.

First published in 1924 in "Lenin Symposium" 1. Printed from the manuscript.

NOTES.

1. As this article was not published, it is not known exactly what its contents were.

2. Published in 1908, with contributions by Bogdanov, Lunacharsky, Bazarov, etc.

3. *Zarya* (The Dawn). A scientific and political journal issued by the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party, 1901-1904.

4. Published at Petersburg in 1899.

5. *One Step Forward, Two Steps Backward*, published 1904.

6. Bogdanov's *Empiriomonism*, published 1904.

7. A volume published in 1904 by a group of Marxists, attacking the "Narodniks" and Revisionists, chief contributors being Bogdanov, Lunacharsky, Bazarov, and Maslov. No Lenin or Plekhanov articles were published in the volume.

8. Ostwald, W. (1853-1932), German chemist, is of importance in this connection chiefly for his *Vorlesungen uber Naturphilosophie*, 1903. Mach (1838-1916) Austrian physicist and philosopher was founder of the theory of Empirio-Criticism. His chief works are, *Analysis of Sensation; Knowledge and Error*.

9. This reference dates the beginning of Lenin's work on *Materialism and Empiriocriticism*.

10. The introduction referred to contained the following sentences: "Unfortunately there is revealed in Russian Social-democracy a strong tendency to make one or another attitude to Mach a question of a fractional division of the party. The very serious tactical differences between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks are intensified by a dispute on questions quite unrelated to these differences in our opinion, namely, is Marxism in agreement in theoretical-cognitive regards with the teaching of Spinoza and Holbach, or Mach and Avenarius?" The declaration in *Proletarian* for 26th (o.s.) February, 1908, stated: "In reality this philosophical dispute is not a fractional one, and, in the opinion of the editorial board, should not be such; any attempt to represent these disagreements as fractional ones is radically erroneous. In both the one and the other fraction there are adherents to both philosophic tendencies."

BOOK REVIEWS

TOWARDS A MARXIST PHILOSOPHY OF ART.

Crisis and Criticism. By Alick West. (Lawrence and Wishart.) 6s. net.

CRISIS and Criticism is the first serious attempt by an English writer to approach a Marxist theory of art-criticism. It is a work only too likely to be passed over in silence ; Marxists in general will not realise that it has an interest, and a profound one, for them, while the experts in criticism whom it confounds will keep silent because it leaves them with so little to say.

For whom is *Crisis and Criticism* important ? In the first place for Marxists, since it is at any rate a beginning in the work of filling a gap, and a serious one, in their armoury. Hitherto we in Britain have limited ourselves, in the main, to attempts to demonstrate the connection between the art of various historic epochs and the economic foundations of those epochs. Thus it is easy to see that at a certain stage in the history of Europe painters and sculptors must paint and execute their sculptures either for the Church or for one of the few princes who have an appetite for such works. From this as a starting point it is easy to show that the shift in the kind of paintings produced, as by the early Italian schools to those produced by the later Flemish and Dutch school, rested upon a change in the economic and social source of the demand—upon the rise of a comfortable bourgeois class with a taste for ornamented domestic interiors. So, more widely, we may trace the succession in the development of the specific Arts (as “ Arts ”)—Architecture, Sculpture, Painting, Music, Poetry and Fine Literature—to a progressive development in the history of human society.

But when this has been done, the problem still remains of *why* men saw a value in these things, not only in the first place, but all the time. A partial explanation of the historical progression in forms of Art only throws into relief the problem as to what exactly constitutes the nature of that which *abides* through all these changes of form, and abides in such a way as to establish an inter-connection and development distinct from and even opposed to the disconnection between the *forms* themselves and the particular development of each form separately.

As Marx says in another connection :—

It is, in reality, much easier to discover by analysis the earthly core of the misty creations of religion, than conversely, it is to develop from the actual relations of life the corresponding ecclesiastical forms of those relations. The latter method is the only nationalistic and therefore the only scientific one.—*Capital*, Vol. I., footnote p. 367 (Moore-Aveling ed.)

Whether Alick West has succeeded or not, it is his merit—and a very great one—that he has seen exactly what is the problem to be solved.

But what, it may be asked, shall we as Marxists gain, even if the problem be solved ? The answer raises the second aspect of this book's importance. Criticism must be something more than an expression of personal likes and dislikes. That a man dislikes cats tells us something about the man, but little or nothing about the cats. That all men feel it necessary to eat, and that they, generally, enjoy their food, tells us that food is necessary and that it can become enjoyable, but one must know what constitutes “ food ” itself, in relation to man, before we can understand fully its necessity and enjoyability.

So with Art-works in general, and more particularly the specific Art-work—poetry and creative literature—to which Alick West restricts his attention. It is not enough for Marxists to suppose that these things will continue to “ happen ”

in the future, as they have in the past. Many things (such as infant mortality) that our ancestors accepted as things that just happened, we no longer accept fatalistically, and if, as we see from the U.S.S.R., it is possible not merely to revolutionise men's whole conception of what is preventable in disease, but to contemplate a radical transformation of the relative significance of climate for man and his food production—then surely we have no excuse for treating the production of Art, and of art creators, as our ancestors treated measles and the cholera, namely, as things that just happen and have to be made the best of when they arrive.

"Nothing human is alien from me," Marx quoted as his favourite motto. Throughout the ages art has embodied the highest forms of human expression and enjoyment ; a critical theory of art must serve as a guide to higher practice and to a higher range of enjoyment.

Alick West tackles the problem in its most immediate form—the state of criticism as it emerges to-day from the most skilled practitioners in the camp of the bourgeoisie. He first shows in a succession of closely packed chapters that in Criticism, as in its world-outlook generally, the bourgeois order stands self-revealed as incapable of further progress—bankrupt and destitute alike of faith, hope, and charity. This is proved by a close and careful analysis of the representative work of the foremost British bourgeois theoreticians—especially that of T. S. Eliot and of I. A. Richards. That a simple negation of bourgeois standards leaves us in no better case is shown by a consideration of the Surrealists represented by Herbert Read. West finds a positive starting point in the striking fact—which workers in other fields have also demonstrated—of the close parallel between the crisis in criticism to-day and that at the close of the Napoleonic wars and the culmination of the industrial revolution. The parallel can be carried much further, but West rightly refrains from pursuing it ; criticism is his subject and he keeps to it.

At its outset the intensifying individualism of the industrial age found expression in the work of the Romantic School—operating within the limits of a contradiction which Romanticism alone was unable to resolve. On the one side the Romantic revolt against conventionalised Classicism was a revolt against a set of artificial barriers which constrained men's sympathies and admiration within arbitrary limits and so excluded from artistic consideration the major part of the human race and most of the everyday concerns of mankind. In so far as they affirmed the right to find the raw material for art-creation in

The common wants and common cares,
That sow the human heart with tares,

the Romantics fought to overthrow a barrier between the artist and community with his fellow-men.

But, on the other hand, in so far as the Romantics felt themselves to be exploring and adventuring into an emotional world till then uncharted and unknown, they found themselves continually stressing the uniqueness of the artistic experience and the essential *loneliness* of the art-creator. From the works of the romantic school one might gather two sharply contrasted and even opposed anthologies, one containing all those passages in which from Burns onward through Blake, Coleridge and Wordsworth to the disintegration of the school in Browning, Tennyson and Swinburne (to say nothing of its vulgarisation in Kipling), the Romantics have affirmed the kinship of art-emotion with the everyday life of plain men and women engaged upon plain everyday work, and the other—all those passages from the same authors showing the various

methods by which they sought escape, and with varying degrees of acrimony affirmed their sense of loneliness, of isolation, and of misanthropic aversion for that Calibantic monstrosity, mankind in its mob-aggregations.

If now, we examine the works of the newest school in creative literature and its theoretical appraisalment we find this same contradiction operating, but with a reverse significance. The misanthropy of the Romantics was only skin-deep. It was in fact only a variety of growing pains—an expression of exasperation at the slowness with which the old conventional habits and valuations yielded before their more fundamental humanitarian onslaught. But with the newer school it is the humanitarianism which is the surface show, or transient mood. That which is fundamental to them is a growing fear of the destructive and creative dynamic of mankind and a concomitant craving for a new absolutism in Art and Philosophy—a neo-Platonism—by means of which they can reinforce their deeply-felt insufficiency against the impending horror which threatens to engulf their order.

West shows that whereas Shelley, Keats, Coleridge and Wordsworth (to name no others) affirmed the right of the artist to possess and to assert his own personal feelings about everything in the cosmos—claiming that only in so far as the artist was *himself*, was he a true artist and a true means of liberating the constrained personalities in his fellow men—to-day the whole trend of art-work is the flight from personality, which finds theoretical expression in the claim that an artist must lose all sense of personality by deliberately merging himself into something “super-real.”

This is to be sharply distinguished from the Marxist view that the individuality of an individual is only an expression, or aspect, of his inescapable social relations. On a Marxist view, for instance, the misanthropy of the Romantics was, like their self-questionings and self-tormentings, an expression of the contradictions and antagonisms then ripening in bourgeois society. It was an artistic criticism, though a one-sided one, of the bourgeois social order. In a communist social order the relations between the individual and society will cease to be contradictory and antagonistic. Hence in such an order the consciousness of dependance upon society will carry with it no sort of sense of the need to be either a “boss” or a “misfit.”

In the light of Marxism the self-deception of the Moderns can be explained and rightly valued. That the romantic school heralded and facilitated a revolutionary advance for mankind in general is not more true than that it also heralded a devastating intensification of slavery for mankind in particular. Bourgeois production achieved an enormous enhancement of the national productive forces of human society, and of mankind's collective power over the force of Nature, but did so only by ways which enslaved an increasing majority of mankind, and enslaved the bourgeoisie itself to its own process of production. In winning the power to dictate to Nature mankind seemed to have created a still more monstrous enslavement for itself.

But whereas the misanthropy of the Romantics disguised their fundamentally revolutionary humanitarianism, with the Moderns it is their abandonment of individualism and egoism which is the superficial disguise. Fundamentally they are for the most part at war with those “humanities” which can only be won to-day through the world process of proletarian revolution. Their pleas for an abandonment of the limitations of personality reveal themselves as modes of surrender to theocratic dogmatism or crude Fascist leader-worship.

West's main theme is that a valid scientific criticism can only be developed through Marxism. In the second part of his work he seeks to show this in detail. Seldom has a work been written in which more thought has been packed into closer compass. The range of Alick West's reading is remarkable and the ground covered so bristles with points of complex and rarefied interest that even a summary is not possible. His merit is not that he has written the last word possible on the subject, but that, for Britain, he has written the *first* word. It is not a perfect book. I am not at all sure that I agree with everything in it. And my doubts on this head arise from what, to me is Alick West's chief fault—his tendency to suppose that his reader has read as widely as he has himself and has reflected for as long upon the problems of criticism. Some of his passages are (unless the fault is in my obtuseness) positively cryptic from over-compression.

I find West at his best in those parts of his work—they form the bulk of the book)—in which he deals with particular writers and specific works. The third part in which he demonstrates his meaning by a critical examination of James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Harold Heslop's *Gate of a Strange Field*, is a joy and a delight from beginning to end—save only that, for me, he is too sparing in his condemnation of the shoddy element in Heslop's work. That the best part of Heslop's work is an attempt to show old man Zola how much better a *real* miner could describe a flood-disaster underground than *Germinal* does, seems to me impudence and also bad art. All the best in Heslop's work is, really, Zola. The rest is either irrelevant or no improvement. West does not even comment upon this derivative aspect of Heslop's work. The detailed analysis of *Ulysses*, on the other hand, is simply masterly.

Alick West has broken open for us a territory which has yet to be conquered and assimilated in detail, but every Marxist owes him a debt of gratitude and will gain much from a careful study of his book.

T. A. JACKSON.

THE AMERICAN LABOUR SCENE.

From Bryan to Stalin. By William Z. Foster. (Lawrence and Wishart.) 8s. 6d.

"BILL" FOSTER, as he is affectionately known to hundreds of thousands of American workers who he has at some time or other helped or personally led in their struggles against the merciless American monopolists, is the outstanding figure in the post-war American Labour Movement, and one of the leaders of the Communist International. Written in autobiographical strain, this book of his is a first-hand history of the various trends and developments in the American Labour Movement since the beginning of the twentieth century.

Son of an Irish immigrant, Foster quickly passed through the Irish Nationalist Movement, through Bryanism with its free coinage of silver as the solution of all the ills of the universe, into a series of strikes and thence to the Socialist Movement. An accomplished orator, writer and organiser, Foster quickly asserted himself as a leader attracted to the Syndicalist I.W.W. and left-wing side of the movement.

We read how Daniel De Leon and the Socialist Labour Party played a leading part in influencing the industrial lefts in the U.S.A. and how Foster, the young

strike leader, came under this influence. Here we get an instructive and penetrating analysis of De Leon and his theories :

De Leonism . . . denied the utility of the everyday struggle for partial immediate political demands. "Not sops," he said, "but unconditional surrender of capitalism—such is the fighting cry of the proletarian revolution" . . . Such a conception had the effect of reducing the party in the pre-revolutionary struggle to simply a talking machine ; the real every-day fighting which was for economic demands only being delegated to the industrial workers.

De Leon taught that once the revolution was accomplished, the Party would instantly dissolve itself and turn the management of the presumably immediately peaceful society over to the Industrial Unions. In this theories the basic organs of the working class are the labour unions. As for the Party, its rôle is only a secondary one, instead of one of central decisive leadership. The whole revolutionary struggle is reduced practically to a trade union question.

And later the S.L.P. has been

An enemy of the Soviet Union and of everything vital and revolutionary in the Labour Movement. It is the most isolated, sterile and futile national party ever produced by the American working class ; a pitiful monument indeed to the sincere and courageous fighter, De Leon.

The heroism and fighting spirit of the I.W.W. receive ample treatment. Whilst recording the struggles, Foster digs deeper to show the reasons for the pre-war predominance of Syndicalism and the slow development of a politically conscious labour movement in America. He attributes the persistence of these Syndicalist tendencies to the more favourable economic situation which checked the class consciousness of the masses—plentiful Government free land during several generations . . . bourgeois democratic illusions due to the fact that the bourgeois revolution accorded the workers a relatively high degree of formal democratic rights of free speech and the fiction of legalised social equality ; decentralised character of the Government, heterogeneous character of the working class—many nations, races and religious traditions.

For years a rank and filer, principally because he was never completely in agreement with the various trends and organisations of his early days, Foster explains how a European tour helped to establish his policy firmly on fundamental trade union questions. Dual unionism was rampant in American. The "boring from within" policy of French Syndicalism, that is, the policy of militant workers penetrating conservative unions, rather than trying to construct new ideal industrial unions on the outside, made a lasting impression on him which he records in his book, and to which I, from personal association with Foster, can testify. It was upon the issue of dual unionism or boring from within that Foster broke with the I.W.W. and set about building up organisations of militants in agreement with his policy.

An illuminating section on Foster's attitude towards the war sharply brings forward the weaknesses of a purely trade union attitude, and emphasises the importance of a revolutionary political party, a lesson which is drawn in a very clear manner by the author.

The Chicago Meat Packing House Strike of 1918 and the great Steel Strike of 1919, both of which were made possible because of Foster's influence and tenacity and which he personally led as the representative of the American Federation of Labour, are reminiscent of the present day wave of strikes spreading throughout America. Whilst the history of these strikes is one of great achievement, it is also one of lost opportunity due to the wavering and at times actual betrayal of the A.F. of L. leadership under Samuel Gompers. Many of the weaknesses of those early post-war strikes can, as Foster shows, be avoided to-day. In 1918 Gompers was the stumbling block, to-day it is William Green, his successor, who is endeavouring to hold back the masses.

The outstanding Labour leader in the country as a result of these two strikes, Foster almost immediately came under the influence of the Communist Movement. He tells of meeting Lenin at Congresses in Moscow, and records with satisfaction that Lenin and the Bolsheviks endorsed the idea of boring from within as against dual unionism. Returning to America a Communist, Foster tells the story of the building of the Communist Party and the long trade union struggles as well as the attempts (abortive until recently) to form a Farmer-Labour Party. The Trade Union Educational League made rapid progress at the beginning, but with the development of the era of Coolidge prosperity found its progress retarded. The American revolutionary movement uniting as it did so many different trends from the Syndicalist, inclined I.W.W. elements to the language sections of the Socialist Party, had its share of the birth pains associated with all new movements or parties. These were responsible for a devastating faction fight inside the Communist Party which was not really solved until 1929 when the last remnants of counter-revolutionary tendencies and factions were expelled from the Party, thus enabling the membership to rise from 7,500 in 1930 to 41,000 in 1936.

The Rooseveltian New Deal era is cogently handled by the author. He shows the attitude of the Labour leaders who eagerly accepted the class-collaboration demagoguery and capitulated to the talk about a new era for the forgotten men. In contrast to this capitulation he relates the development of the militant movement led by the Communists which urged a mass trade union organisation drive as the only way to bring reality to Roosevelt's sham talk about the right to organise. He shows how the T.U.E.L. unions merged with the A.F. of L., giving up their independent existence and pushing forward for united industrial and social advance and how this united drive made possible the development of the Committee for Industrial Organisation which to-day is writing brilliant new pages of working-class history.

This book is by far the most detailed and important yet written on the American Labour Movement, particularly from the trade union and industrial side. It helps to supply an answer to the many queries and doubts about the Roosevelt era and shows the development of the American working class to revolutionary consciousness.

PAT DEVINE.

THE CONDITION OF BRITAIN.

The Condition of Britain. By G. D. H. and M. I. Cole. (Gollancz.) 7s. 6d. (Left Book Club edition, 3s. 6d.)

THE object of this book, it is stated, is to give a realistic picture of the present living conditions of the British people. This is attempted by an extensive use of statistical material, mainly compiled from Government sources and from such economists as Stamp, Bowley and Clark. On questions of nutrition and health Sir John Orr and Dr. M'Gonigle are drawn upon.

In the introduction the problem and the remedy are set out in two paragraphs which in themselves give the key to the conceptions and conclusions of Mr. and Mrs. Cole. The problem: "There is to-day a vast mass of avoidable misery and suffering in Great Britain. Some part of this is doubtless the 'fault' of individuals, and is remediable, if at all, only by individual action. But a far larger part is due principally to social causes and can be remedied only by

collective action." (pp. 20-21.) The remedy: "Society, we believe, ought to pursue as its first object, not the greatness of the State or Nation, but the happiness and well-being of the greatest number of its citizens. Among its tasks the first is to make the mass of the people as healthy and carefree as only good nourishment and good housing and education in the arts of life can make them." (p. 23.)

Like the economists of the seventeenth century, Mr. and Mrs. Cole start out from the living aggregate—the population of Great Britain—the rich and the poor, where they live, what they work at, the wealth they produce and how it is distributed in capitalist Britain. But all the material from Government sources does not present the real picture of conditions.

To take only two examples: infant mortality rates and the distribution of the national income. Table 11, p. 31 and Table 12, p. 96, which deal with rates of infantile mortality, give the rates for England and Wales, and for Scotland, as a whole and for areas as a whole, thus hiding the wide disparity between the infantile mortality rates in working class wards and those in residential wards; e.g.: Manchester, Didsbury Ward 46 per 1,000; All Saints, 113 per 1,000.

Other Tables which I consider suspect are those dealing with the estimated distribution of the national income, particularly with reference to the share which goes to wages and that which goes in profit and interest. Take, for example, Table VII, p. 67, which represents wages as receiving 38.5 per cent. of the National Income in 1911 and 40.4 per cent. in 1931.

The gross income of this country in 1913, for income tax purposes, was £1,167,000,000, while in 1936 it had grown to £2,500,000,000. Actually, the income of the taxpaying part of the community, after making the necessary allowances, had risen since pre-war days by something between two to two and a half times. Wages, as compared with the year before the war, had increased by only 64 per cent.

Yet Mr. and Mrs. Cole tell us on p. 79: "It is also true that the main body of the working classes is absolutely and relatively a good deal better off to-day in terms of material goods than it was a century ago. . . . the existing social structure possesses a high degree of rigidity, so that through all the economic fluctuations of recent years the relative incomes and possessions of the rich and poor have been remarkably little modified." (p. 79).

The sections dealing with the working class movement, the Trade Unions and the Labour Party discuss the modern problems of Trade Union organisation and the perspective of the Labour Party. The authors note the smouldering discontent of the workers, which breaks out in strikes with which official Trade Unionism has nothing to do except to deplore the impulsiveness of the workers' action, order them back to work and suspect them of being under "subversive Communistic influence"; on which the authors comment: "*as, of course, they occasionally are.*" Regarding the Labour Party, the authors' conclusion is that in the existing political conditions there is no prospect at all of Labour winning in the near future an independent majority in the House of Commons, and that the way forward in Britain is the creation of a People's Front.

W. Joss.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- Capital*. Abridged by John Strachey. Karl Marx. (Nelson.) 358 pp. 1s. 6d.
- The Groundwork of Economic Theory*. J. Watson. (P. S. King and Son.) 196 pp. 9s.
- Hotel in Spain*. Nancy Johnstone. (Faber and Faber.) 333 pp. 8s. 6d.
- Men of Mathematics*. E. T. Bell. (Gollancz.) 653 pp. 12s. 6d.
- The Economic Reforms Required for Lasting Prosperity and Peace*. A. G. McGregor. (Economic Reform Club.) 42 pp. 9d.
- The German Universities and National Socialism*. Edward Yarnall Hartshorne, jun. (Allen and Unwin.) 184 pp. 6s.
- The Empire of the Nabobs*. Lester Hutchinson. (Allen and Unwin.) 277 pp. 7s. 6d.
- Empire Social Hygiene Year Book, 1937*. (British Social Hygiene Council Inc.) 600 pp. 15s.
- How Much Compensation?* Ernest Davies. (New Fabian Research Bureau.) 59 pp. 1s.
- The £ s. d. of National Defence*. P. M. Rae. (Hodge.) 199 pp. 6s.
- Prometheus and the Bolsheviks*. John Lehmann. (The Cresset Press.) 255 pp. 12s. 6d.
- The People's Front*. G. D. H. Cole. (Gollancz.) 366 pp. 7s. 6d.
- Towards the Christian Revolution*. Various contributors. (Gollancz.) 288 pp. 6s.
- The Anatomy of Spirit*. Jack Lindsay. (Methuen.) 183 pp. 5s.
- The Life of Jesus*. Conrad Noel. (J. M. Dent.) 619 pp. 12s. 6d.
- Money and the Machine Age*. T. W. Wyatt. (P. S. King and Son.) 120 pp. 2s. 6d.
- The Fascist, his State and his Mind*. E. B. Ashton. (Putnam.) 303 pp. 8s. 6d.
- The Triumph of Barrabas*. Giovanni Giglio. (Gollancz.) 317 pp. 10s. 6d.
- Vive le Roy*. Ford Maddox Ford. (Allen and Unwin.) 321 pp. 7s. 6d.
- Library Co-operation in the British Isles*. Luxmoore Newcombe. (Allen and Unwin.) 184 pp. 5s.
- Peasant and Prince*. Glorney Bolton. (Routledge.) 296 pp. 12s. 6d.
- Moscow, 1937*. Lion Feuchtwanger. (Gollancz.) 174 pp. 2s. 6d.
- It Can be Done*. Report of the 14th Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain, May, 1937. (Communist Party.) 308 pp. 6d.
- Saint-Just*. Ses Idées Politiques et Sociales. (Editions Sociales Internationales.) 176 pp. 12f.
- Pamphlets: *Coal Combines in Northumberland*. W. H. Williams. (Labour Research Department.) 1d. *Mosley in Motley*. A. C. Miles. 3d. *Skeleton of the Empire*. Leonard Barnes. (Fact No. 3.) 6d.

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